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The Parliamentary Elections in Belarus: Lukashenka's Dress Rehearsal?

Uladzimir Padhol and David R. Marples

On 16 October 2000 the Advisory and Monitoring Group of the OSCE in Minsk declared that the parliamentary elections, which took place in the Republic of Belarus on 15 October, did not meet international standards for democratic elections. In addition the US Department of State has also refused to recognize the validity of the elections and will continue to regard the Parliament of the 13th Session, dissolved by President Lukashenka in late 1996, as the legitimate parliament of Belarus. The chairman of that parliament, Semyon Sharetsky, left Belarus in the summer of 1999, fearing for his safety. A second round of the elections took place on 29 October, resulting in the election of 97 deputies in the 110-seat assembly. It may take a further three months for the remaining thirteen seats to be filled.

The elections have been the subject of considerable debate among all factions of the political spectrum in Belarus since they were announced last summer. A division occurred among the opposition between those who felt that the only logical step was to boycott the elections—led by politicians such as Anatolii Lebedka, the chairman of the United Civic Party, and Vintsuk Vyachorka, the leader of the Belarusian Popular Front—and those who have maintained that it was important for opposition leaders to gain a foothold in state structures by means of the assembly—such as Nikolay Statkevich, the leader of the Social Democratic Party, and Henadz Hrushavy, the chairman of the largest NGO in Minsk, “For the Children of Chernobyl.” These leaders planned to run as independent candidates, without official backing from their respective parties, believing that the elections might orient the populace to democratic values.

The OSCE and the Dialogue

The decision of Statkevich and Hrushavy was supported by the OSCE's Advisory and Monitoring Group in Minsk, led by Ambassador Hans Georg

Wieck, which has maintained that the opposition should gain a foothold in the official structures and advocated a mass turnout at the polling booths as a form of public protest. The role of the OSCE AMB has itself caused dissension among the opposition,¹ some of whom have maintained that the organization is in this way promoting the government's cause. At issue are the results of an agreement made between President Alyaksander Lukashenka and the OSCE at a summit in Istanbul, Turkey, in November 1999, during which Lukashenka agreed to develop a serious “dialogue” with the opposition, thereby (it was hoped) bringing to an end the impasse between the two sides, which dates back to the November 1996 referendum by which the president amended the 1994 Constitution to enhance his own powers and conversely to reduce that of the Supreme Soviet. Though Western states in general did not recognize the validity of the changes made by Lukashenka, or the legality of the referendum through which he engineered them, the OSCE AMG in Minsk worked steadily to encourage Lukashenka to open the dialogue with the opposition.

The agreement made in Istanbul obliged Lukashenka to fulfill four conditions:

- To allow the opposition access to the official media;
- To give legislative authority to the parliament;
- To provide a democratic election code;
- To end political repression that has seen the arrest and detention of many activists, in addition to the disappearance of several prominent oppositionists.

¹ Most notably the Conservative Christian Party of the Belarusian Popular Front, led by the former BPF leader, Zyanon Paznyak. Paznyak has been in exile from Belarus since 1996.

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Lukashenko accepted the notion of consultation and appointed M. Sazonov as the negotiator for the government side. The opposition leaders discovered in practice that it was impossible for the disparate political leaders to sit at the same table. They included, for example, the chairman of the Liberal Democratic Party, Haydukevich, the chairman of the Communist Party, Kalyakin, and the leaders of the United Civic Party and the Belarusian Popular Front (BPF), which itself divided into two branches in 1999. Kalyakin's Communists supported integration with Russia whereas the other parties were anxious to protect Belarusian statehood. Haydukevich's party was virtually a branch of the Russian party of the same name led by Zhirinovskiy. On Lukashenko's side there was also some cause for concern. The logical outcome of the Dialogue was the emergence of a group of democratic leaders, with access to the official media, who might eventually be elected to parliament and form a strong enough bloc to prevent the ratification of a Union Treaty with Russia. Thus the president resolved to limit the discussions to a few leaders with whom he could deal adequately or who in general supported the same long-term goals as the government. These included the Yabloko party run by Olga Abramova and the Liberal Democrats. Sazonov was eventually dismissed from his post as the government spokesman and the talks broke down.

Under these circumstances, and with the political situation at an impasse, the opposition had to make a decision whether to participate in the parliamentary elections. An important marker in reaching a decision was the All-Belarusian Congress, held in Minsk in the summer of 2000. The OSCE's Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights sent a small technical group to Belarus to observe the elections, while pointing out that this group did not constitute official recognition of the validity of the elections. The Lukashenko government, however, purported to believe otherwise, choosing to regard the delegation as ipso facto recognition of the electoral process. The United States, which recently held Senate hearings about the political repressions in Belarus, took a hostile stance from the outset and declined to send any observers.

Prior to the election, on 15 September, the Central Electoral Commission, under the chairmanship of Lidziya Yarmoshyna, rejected the

registration of over 60 democratic candidates on the grounds that some of the signatures they had collected were invalid, or else they had given incorrect information about their financial situation. Those rejected included virtually all the prominent candidates from the wing of the opposition movement that supported the elections (Statkevich and former Prime Minister Mikhail Chyhir were the notable exceptions). Supporters of Hrushavyy, for example, had reportedly collected more than 40 times the required number of signatures for their candidate. Further, another 200 candidates were not permitted to run by local election commissions. Those de-registered took their case to the Supreme Court, which subsequently upheld the decisions of the central and local commissions. Those politicians excluded in this fashion then joined in the general boycott called for by the opposition.

Opposition leaders reported more evidence of electoral indiscretions. The opposition sent observers into most of the electoral districts in the period 10-15 October. According to Viachorka, 20 percent of the ballots in the Hrodna region were cast before 15 October and in improper fashion. Students from the Belarusian State Economic University and the Belarusian University of Culture reported that their faculties were under acute pressure to halt classes and force the students to vote. Many professors believed that they would lose their jobs otherwise. The Vyasna human rights center's chairman, Ales Belyatsky, noted that the electoral commissions indiscriminately removed names from the register and allowed numerous people to vote without showing identification. The Electoral Commission itself was formed by the government and included very few members from opposition groups. Notably, despite what appeared to be obvious falsifications of the election results in several constituencies, not a single member of the Commission ever admitted to such in the independent press or before the courts.

According to Yarmoshyna, the official electoral turnout was 60.6 percent, thus well above the minimum requirement of 50 percent, and this despite a decision by the more radical opposition members to boycott the elections. Official figures indicate that the 50 percent total was reached or exceeded in 96 out of 110 electoral districts, with 14 districts declared invalid because of insufficient voters. Of these 14 districts, 5 were in the Brest region, 4 in Vitsebsk, and 3 in the city of Minsk.

Notably, whereas the 43 candidates who received an outright majority in the first round included 22 members of the former parliament (Lukashenka version) and leaders of the KGB and Union of Patriotic Youth, those with invalidated ballots included Statkevich of the Social Democratic Party and Serhy Haydukevych, leader of the Liberal Democratic Party of Belarus.

None of the prominent opposition candidates (with the exception of Abramova) fared very well. Chyhir received 23 percent of the vote, well behind Natalia Masherova, daughter of the former Communist Party leader of Belarus (Petr Masherov), who received 48 percent. According to the authorities, Haydukevich received 10 percent of the vote in his riding, which left him in last place. Kalyakin's total was 15 percent. The Communists as a whole, who ran in 71 ridings, won only four seats. The opposition observers dispute the official figures and particularly those for the percentage of voters: they maintain that the turnout was about 30-40 percent of the electorate in the towns and up to 45 percent in rural areas. In short, they believe that the results were falsified.

The US assessment of the elections concurs with that of the so-called European parliamentary troika: the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, the European Parliament, and the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, all of whom resolved to put on hold any decision to normalize relations with Belarus. The representatives acknowledged that the government had made some improvements, but that overall the elections still fell short of the standards required. In contrast, Russian president Vladimir Putin—according to Lukashenka—had telephoned his congratulations to his Belarusian counterpart on the conducting of democratic elections. There has, however, been no public statement from President Putin to this effect, though the Russian Foreign Ministry praised the elections and the way in which they were conducted on 18 October. In addition, the Russian parliament sent a delegation to observe the elections, which reported that that they maintained a high democratic standard.

A Prelude to the Presidential Elections of 2001

The run-off elections on 29 October saw 53 ridings contested and an alleged turnout of just over 50 percent. Prior to the 15 October vote, the opposition organized protest marches in cities across Belarus. Generally, however, the number of those who marched was relatively small—averaging around 2,000—except in the more politicized city of Minsk, where an estimated 4,000 demonstrated against the elections. The opposition held a press conference on 16 October, declaring that the boycott represented a victory, citing the statement of the US Department of State. The new parliament is a strange collection of deputies. Only 16 are affiliated with any political party (mostly Communists) and only one major opposition leader has a seat—Olga Abramova, the leader of the Belarusian branch of the Yabloko faction, which in Russia, despite its democratic basis, supports the integration of Belarus into Russia.

In some respects, the elections might be written off as a non-event. The process was controlled by the government, which ensured that very few strong oppositionists would be able to stand for office. The ultimate result will be another powerless assembly, while the president will continue to control the upper house that he established in late 1996. Thus the question arises why the process was conducted at all, what possible benefits might be derived from the elections from the government perspective?

First and foremost, the elections are widely perceived as a foretaste of the presidential election that must take place by November 2001, according to the revised Constitution. Those oppositionists who insisted on running as independent candidates often stressed this point, i.e., that if they abandoned the electoral process, the electorate would perceive them as neglecting its interests and its willingness to adopt more democratic practices. Hrushavy's comment was that "The people will vote, and they will vote for someone."² Moreover this school of thought maintained that the chances of electoral success in a presidential election if the elections were boycotted would be minimal. The aftermath of the elections sees a variety of groups that are

² Authors' interview with Henadz Hrushavy, Minsk, Belarus, 2 August 2000.

anticipating the presidential elections a year ahead of time. These are as follows:

1. The OSCE AMG led by Wieck will continue to play an important role in its efforts to encourage debate between the various opposition centers and the intransigent government.

2. A new group called "Citizens' Committee 'Elections-2001'" has been established. It includes politicians, such as Hrushavy, who are democrats, but who were denied registration in the October 2000 elections, and it seeks a leader who can unite the various opposition sectors and run against Lukashenka.

3. The Supreme Soviet of the 13th Session led by Sharetsky has received recognition from the United States, which renders it a continuing player in the light of the violations of democratic procedure during the elections. On 17 October, Sharetsky, evidently emboldened by international recognition, called for a "Temporary Government of National Unity," indicating his likely participation in the process of electing a new president.

4. The democrats on the Right have formed an umbrella group called New Freedom, which is led by Anatoly Lebedka of the United Civic Party and Vintsuk Vyachorka of the Belarusian Popular Front, two politicians who were at the forefront of the boycott movement. Lebedka has not commented on speculation that he will run for president, but he has created an association of young politicians and appears to be assembling a team in support of his candidacy. Lebedka has close links with several American politicians and has received some financial support from such quarters. Officially, however, Lebedka supports the notion of a single candidate from the opposition.

5. Haydukevich's Liberal-Democratic Party will continue to play a role. While it is unlikely to acquire mass popularity, Haydukevich is one of the few politicians that have been acceptable to Lukashenka in the Dialogue process.

6. The Communist Party of Kalyakin, which has representation, however minimal, in the new parliament.

7. The Social Democratic Hramada led by Statkevich, a politician who has widespread recognition from Germany, the European country that appears most committed to Belarus.

8. Yabloko led by Abramova, whose standing has been enhanced despite the lack of credibility of

the elections.

9. A group around former Prime Minister Mikhail Chyhir, who ran in the October elections but was defeated in the run-offs. Chyhir and his family have suffered repeated harassment and detentions from the government, creating considerable sympathy on his behalf from the public.

10. The Conservative Christian Party of Zyanon Paznyak, which has taken the position of non-cooperation in any sphere with the government.

11. Stanislau Shushkevich, the former Speaker of parliament and the leader of Belarus in the period immediately after independence. Shushkevich recently appeared on Moscow Television's *Vremya* and announced that he had gathered 700,000 signatures in support of his candidacy for president. Both he and Paznyak ran for president in the elections of 1994, gaining between them about 22% of the total vote.

12. The intelligentsia and politicians who held the All-Belarusian Congress in the summer of 2000, which accepted resolutions supporting the continued independence of Belarus. There is some overlap between this group and the "AElections 2001" committee.

13. A coalition of youth organizations, which includes the Youth Front, the Youth Society, and the Young Christians Social Union, in addition to the youth structure of the United Civic Party.

Can the opposition unite its forces to put forward a credible candidate to run against Lukashenka? The process of the OSCE Dialogue and the parliamentary elections has indicated yet again that there are serious divisions among the opposition, which serve only to bewilder the fragile electorate. It seems unlikely that a single candidate might emerge from the plethora of political parties and different interest groups described above. The president has already dismissed the possible candidacy of Chyhir, noting that since his former Premier could not win a seat in the parliament, it is highly unlikely that voters would accept him as a candidate for the office of president. Politicians such as Sharetsky and Paznyak have the perhaps insurmountable problem of operating from outside the country. Paznyak already ran into serious problems in this regard in the mock presidential elections held by the opposition in the spring of 1999. Opinion polls over the past three years have

not suggested that the electorate supports strongly any of the various candidates for president, potential or actual.

Is it likely that the government will permit a democratic election for president? Lukashenka may take one of two routes: either the "one against all" route that was demonstrated effectively by Ukrainian president Leonid Kuchma in October 1999, when he successfully ran for re-election in that country; or else the prevention of registration for candidate of opposition leaders. Lukashenka already appears to be confident of success, and declared that journalists could anticipate congratulating him on his future victory.³ More ominously, however, he has also stated that if the opposition wishes to take part in the presidential elections, then it must start to work "constructively" with the president.⁴

The parliamentary elections also demonstrated that however flawed the process may have been, the Belarusian government is not immune to international opinion and criticism. This is evident from the sharp comments emanating from the Belarusian Foreign Ministry dissenting from the views of the representative from Europe. Lukashenka has also been sharply critical of the Western views on the elections, particularly those of the United States. Belarus is in an acute economic and social crisis and the government is finding it increasingly hard to divorce itself from these problems. Both wages and pensions have fallen to an all-time low in dollar values (around \$32 and \$17 per month respectively). Polls indicate that while there is as yet no credible alternative political candidate to Lukashenka, the population is anxious to see measures in place to improve the standard of living.

The Russian Perspective

The elections illustrated the critical role of Russia in the future of Belarus. Though the Russia-Belarus Union, which has gone through several stages, has run into difficulties, Russia is today the only country that provides substantial economic and political support to the government of Belarus. Though a majority of Russians favor the incorporation of Belarus, the Putin government

must take into account the views of the United States and the countries of Europe, none of which would support the elimination of Belarusian independence unilaterally by Russia. The decision must be seen to come from within Belarus. The most democratic route would therefore be a national referendum. However, sociological surveys conducted in 1999 revealed that only a minority of those polled supported the union with Russia, whereas a clear majority favored the continuing independence of the Belarusian state.

The second possibility is the legitimization of the Union by the leadership organs of Belarus. However, the situation is complex. Lukashenka's official term as president, according to the 1994 Constitution, ended on 20 July 1999. The European states and the United States have never recognized the validity of the November 1996 Referendum through which Lukashenka expanded his powers and extended his term in office until November 2001. Similarly, the smaller version of the parliament (120 seats rather than 260) that replaced the Parliament of the 13th Session also lacks international recognition. For Russia, an act of union between the two states decreed by the existing state organs would be unsatisfactory in an international climate that does not perceive these organs as legitimate. The parliamentary elections of October 2000, however, presented a new possibility of making the Union a reality, providing that the deputies elected were supportive of such an event. As a result, Russia took a profound interest in the procedures and candidates.

Lukashenka's attitude toward the Russia-Belarus Union is currently ambiguous. In the Yeltsin era there seemed to be a realistic hope for the Belarusian president that he might ultimately assume the presidency of such a Union. Under Putin, this hope has faded. The new Russian president appears more inclined to favor a single territory, i.e., to incorporate Belarus into Russia as a western province, without any corresponding body to administer the amalgamated state. In such a Russia, there would clearly be no role for Lukashenka. Consequently, some of Lukashenka's speeches, paradoxically, have sounded patriotic. He is unwilling, publicly, to give up independence if Belarus is not to be treated as an equal partner. The Putin administration, however, must remain a major player in Belarus and perceives for itself a significant role now that the United States has so publicly

³ *Belarusian Television*, 15 October 2000.

⁴ *Sovetskaya Belorussiya*, 20 October 2000.

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distanced itself from the authoritarian republic.

The new US ambassador to Belarus, Michael Kozak, caused much anger in Minsk official circles with his comment that Belarus today is the “Cuba of Europe.” However, the republic appears to be increasingly isolated, almost a backwater of Soviet-style repression amid a sea of general change. With the fall of Slobodan Milosevic in Yugoslav, Alyaksander Lukashenka is the only remaining dictator of the old Communist style remaining in Europe. Opposition demonstrations have frequently made an analogy between the two leaders, who have

long been on friendly terms. It is a comparison that the Belarusian president can ill afford to ignore, though for the moment his position remains secure.

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A Sacred Place is Never Empty: The External Geopolitics of the Transcaspian

Stephen Blank

The ongoing fighting in Chechnya and Central Asia illustrates how the Russian proverb of my title ("sviato mesto pusto ne byvaet") applies to the Transcaspian region. Central Asia and the Caucasus have become "sacred" battlegrounds of a new great game involving many states and movements. Thus the legal status of the Caspian Sea, a focal point of Transcaspian energy issues, "sits at the intersection of the sexiest questions in international relations."¹

These rivalries are not merely an East-West competition for energy access. Several simultaneous overlapping smaller games conducted by the local states themselves and neighboring political factions like Afghanistan's rivals for power are also occurring and involve geostrategy, the quest for energy access, ethnic and religious struggles, and outright criminality, e.g., Afghanistan and Central Asia's narcotics trafficking, perhaps Central Asia's most vertically integrated industry.² Thus Russia declared drugs a national security threat in 1999 and U.S. officials and analysts view Central Asia as a sieve through which nuclear and other contraband regularly flow.³ Consequently many games are occurring on multiple chess boards.

The Transcaspian's Strategic Geography

Any geostrategic analysis must begin with geography. The Transcaspian region is simultaneously an object and a subject of overlapping interstate relationships in Europe, the Middle East, South and East Asia. No discussion of its "sacredness" is complete if it ignores the simultaneity and breadth of its penetration by a much broader range of political forces than is presumed in conventional discussion of the new great game.

This region's geopolitics stretch from influence over economic-political outcomes in Southeastern Europe to membership in the OSCE and Partnership for Peace (PFP), the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) and the Organization of Islamic Countries (OIC), to membership and even sponsorship of Asian security fora. These states participate in PFP programs and exercises, while Georgia and Azerbaijan actively seek NATO guarantees and even membership or alliance with NATO and Israel either to resolve their internal ethnic conflicts or to guard future pipelines.⁴ Georgia and Turkey espouse a regional security system to anchor the region firmly to Turkey, and through it to NATO, the EU, and the United States, and counter a perceived Russo-Greek-Armeno-Iranian counter-alliance against those states and

¹ Bahram Rajaee, "Regional Geopolitics and Legal Regimes: The Caspian Sea and US Policy," *International Politics*, 37, no. 1 (Mar. 2000):75.

² This was suggested to the author by S. Frederick Starr, Director of Johns Hopkins' Central Asia Institute in Washington, D.C., in November 1999.

³ "Outlook," *U.S. News and World Report*, April 17, 2000, p. 11; Stephen Bryen, "The New Islamic Bomb," *Washington Times*, April 10, 2000.

⁴ Jan S. Adams, "The U.S.-Russian Face-off in the Caspian Basin," *Problems of Post-Communism*, 47, no. 1 (Jan.-Feb. 2000):55-57; Taras Kuzio, "Geopolitical Pluralism in the CIS: The Emergence of GUUAM," *European Security*, 9, no. 2 (Summer 2000):99-105; Svante E. Cornell, "Uzbekistan: A Regional Player in Eurasian Geopolitics?" *European Security*, 9, no. 2 (Summer 2000):122; and conversations with Azeri experts in Washington and Tel Aviv (1999).

Azerbaijan.⁵ Romania and Bulgaria also seek entry into regional energy and security agendas, further complicating evolving security relationships.⁶

While NATO has shunned this commitment, this lineup of states on both sides illustrates the interpenetration or convergence of different regional security systems here. And that process goes far beyond Europe. The mention of Israel and of Iran in these prospective blocs demonstrates Middle Eastern involvement in this sweepstakes and how the former Soviet republics have become part of the "New Middle East." Politicians everywhere grasp this fact. Moscow's Joint Communique with Egypt (September 1997) stated:

Security and stability in the European continent are organically linked to security in the Mediterranean, the Near East, and other adjacent regions, including the Black Sea. Guidelines and practical activities designed to ensure security and stability in one region must be supplemented with measures to achieve the same thing in other regions. The CIS is an important factor of stability and development in Eurasia and the world as a whole.⁷

Thus the Transcaspian's importance derives equally from geography and from energy sources. U.S. policy is not just about energy access, but is geostrategic in its own right. Such reasoning probably applies to the other powers involved given their proximity to the region.⁸

The southern CIS connects Russia and the Middle East and more generally Europe and Asia and is the medium through which any state or region projects power and influence in the other region. These geopolitical facts retain an enduring significance. The expectation and construction of major infrastructural and communications projects, like the EU's Silk Road project, have already promoted an accelerating and deepening transformation of Transcaspian relationships with foreign states, not just neighbors.⁹ These transformations will surely enhance these areas' importance as a medium through which foreign governments project power and influence into other zones, thereby increasing the already large number of foreign interactions of Transcaspian states and adding to regional rivalries.¹⁰ Therefore the following terms accurately capture this region's strategic location between contending major and smaller powers, its strategic fragmentation and local governments' difficulties in creating any overall unifying framework, and the rivalry not just among *all* the the great powers who aspire to play a major regional role here.

First of all, the Caucasus (i.e., the North Caucasus part of the Russian Federation and the Transcaucasian states, Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia) and Central Asia comprise a shatterbelt or shatterbelt zone, i.e., "strategically oriented regions that are politically fragmented areas of competition between the continental and maritime

⁵ Istanbul, *Milliyet* (Ankara edition), in Turkish, February 12, 2000; *Foreign Broadcast Information Service Central Eurasia*, henceforth *FBIS SOV*, February 16, 2000; Moscow, *Krasnaya Zvezda*, in Russian, February 16, 2000, *FBIS SOV*, February 16, 2000; Elkhan E. Nuriev, "Conflicts, Caspian Oil, and NATO, Major Pieces of the Caspian Puzzle" in Gary K. Bertsch, et al., *Crossroads and Conflict: Security and Foreign Policy in the Caucasus and Central Asia* (NY: Routledge, 1999), 140-51.

⁶ Stephen Blank, "Russian and Europe in the Caucasus," *European Security*, 4, no. 4 (Winter 1995):630-31.

⁷ Moscow, *Internet, Russian Federation Presidential Administration WWW*, in Russian, September 29, 1997, *FBIS SOV*, 97-272, September 30, 1997.

⁸ Statement of Stephen Sestanovich, Ambassador-at-Large, Special Adviser to the Secretary of State for the New Independent States, Before the House International Relations Committee, April 30, 1998, *Turkistan Newsletter*, vol. 98-2:089-o6-May-1998 (henceforth: Sestanovich, Testimony) and the statements by Ashton Carter and John Deutch in

"Caspian Studies Program Experts Conference Report: Succession and Long-Term Stability in the Caspian Region," Strengthening Democratic Institutions Project, John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, 1999, pp. 10-12 (henceforth: Conference Report).

⁹ Manaz Z. Ispahani, *Roads and Rivals: The Political Uses of Access in the Borderlands of Asia* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1989) for the geostrategic importance of transportation routes in Central Asia.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

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powers.”¹¹ Continental and maritime powers are traditional geopolitical designations for Russia and the United States and/or United Kingdom respectively. This terminology signifies the persistent rivalry between these two “blocs” over shatterbelts like the former Ottoman empire and the Middle East.

Shatterbelts cannot overcome physical, environmental, historical, cultural, and political differences to form a lasting basis for unified political or economic action. Some parts of a shatterbelt may seek neutrality, others may opt for a tighter or looser association with a great power either out of strategic choice or constraint from the great power.¹² Nevertheless, disunity remains their “default option” and facilitates the larger foreign interventions between contending blocs or powers that fixes the region as a shatterbelt.

To the extent that these new states forge and develop political, economic, and cultural ties with the Middle East they will integrate with the new Middle East, the paradigmatic shatterbelt and the region most penetrated by the interactions of great external powers.¹³ The Middle East is riven by internal and interstate conflicts having little to do with great power rivalries that predate and postdate the Cold War. Internal conflicts within and among the local states also characterize the Caucasus and Central Asia. Thus the Middle East remains a classic shatterbelt torn by both external great power competition and the internal rivalries among regional states, powers of a second, regional rank.

Presently, then the only remaining shatterbelt is the Middle East, and it, too, is in transition. The Middle

East is tilting toward the maritime [Rimland] realm, as the former Soviet Union has suddenly ceased to be a major economic and military supplier, at least for the time being. Nonetheless, Russia remains sensitive to the future strategic orientation of the new Caucasus and Central Asian states and especially to the roles of Turkey and Iran. [...] The Middle East is also a shatterbelt because it is so highly fragmented. The region contains six regional powers—Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Syria, and Turkey—which in turn, cast their shadows over smaller states or separate groups within those states.¹⁴

Transcaspian states, along with India, Pakistan, and China, all function in the Transcaspian context exactly as geostrategists would expect. These states,

Are emerging cores within their regions. They have nodal characteristics in terms of trade and transportation as well as military influence, and they aspire to regional or subregional influence. Limited extraregional economic or political ties are also characteristic of such powers. Finally, though often overshadowed by a great power, second-order states try to avoid satellite status, sometimes by playing off one major power against the other.¹⁵

Consequently, the Transcaspian states or territories are also typical buffer states. They are situated between two or more conflicting spheres of influence and they mainly separate the conflicting sides. Buffer states could comprise a rather large zone of territory, as in this case. But what determines their status is their “vicinal location”, i.e., their location near neighboring “spheres of influence.” Here these buffer states’ primary characteristic is the presence of strategically important transportation routes. The presence of such routes, e.g., pipelines, ensures the buffer zone’s importance to its neighbors and virtually guarantees that all rivals will strive for decisive influence over those routes or at least to

¹¹ Mackubin Thomas Owens, “In Defense of Classical Geopolitics,” *Naval War College Review*, 52, no. 4 (Autumn 1999): 69, quoted from Saul B. Cohen, *Geography and Politics in a World Divided*, 2d ed. (NY: Oxford University Press, 1973), 86-87; and Rajace, p. 78, quoted from “Geopolitics in the New World Era,” in George Demko and William Wood (eds.), *Reordering the World: Geopolitical Perspectives on the 21st Century* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1994), 34.

¹² Ibidem.

¹³ M. E. Ahari, *The New Great Game in Muslim Central Asia*, McNair Paper, no. 47, Institute for National Security Studies, National Defense University, Washington, D.C., 1996, pp. 45-50.

¹⁴ Cohen, p. 32, in Demko and Wood, as quoted by Rajace, p. 78.

¹⁵ Cohen, p. 26, in Demko and Wood, as quoted by Rajace, p. 78.

prevent others from gaining decisive control over them.¹⁶

Consequently, because the Transcaspian region adjoins all their spheres of influence, the great powers and second-order powers contend for influence. And for every effort at cooperation like GUUAM, an organization comprising Georgia, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Moldova, and Azerbaijan established to counter Russian pressure upon those states, there arises other countervailing trends. Examples of those countervailing trends are Russia and China's use of terrorist threats to initiate their own effort at military-police integration of the area around Russia, or the Russo-Armenian alliance, or the Russo-Iranian strategic partnership, or the Russo-Chinese partnership to which Central Asian issues certainly contribute. Indeed, Moscow has used the terrorist threat to attenuate Uzbekistan's adherence to the GUUAM organization and weaken GUUAM's ability to serve as a counter security system in the CIS.¹⁷

Finally the Transcaspian has also become or can be viewed as a security complex. As this term's originator, Barry Buzan, defines it, a security complex denotes "a set of states whose major security perceptions and concerns are so interlinked that their national security problems cannot reasonably be analyzed apart from one another."¹⁸ Whether these security concerns are those of amity or enmity, the intensity of these states' interactions with each other is much greater than are their relations with states outside the

complex. But this complex is, in his words, "overlaid" with the external great and small power rivalries around and inside the Transcaspian. These patterns of "overlay" suppress or distort indigenous trends and processes of formation of relationships among Transcaspian states.¹⁹ Since the Transcaspian is simultaneously conceivable as a shatterbelt, buffer zone, and security complex internal and external crises are everywhere inextricable. While internal structurally-derived crises may be the most threatening ones to these governments, those crises cannot be confronted analytically or in political reality apart from the regional and global dynamics of the regional rivalries for influence.²⁰

Because of the large number of external forces the minimum needs of all concerned parties are or should be that no one foreign power dominate the Transcaspian. This outcome should satisfy their minimum, if not greater, interests while addressing the local states' urgent and legitimate needs. Then this area would be nobody's sphere of influence and become instead "a zone of free competition."²¹ Despite the multifarious internal trends that could destabilize this area, none of the major contenders, Russia, China, and the United States is ready to accept this. Therefore smaller contenders like Pakistan and Iran, Israel, India, and Saudi Arabia will not do so either. Indeed, Washington ultimately aims to transform it from a shatterbelt into part of the West's pluralistic security community.²² Since that threatens many other states' interests this region remains a contested one.

The Transcaspian states confront multiple and parallel internal challenges that could serve as the basis or pretexts for larger international crises and

¹⁶ As we saw in 1999 and 2000, there are enormous and ongoing opportunities for internal inter-state conflict throughout the Transcaucasus, north Caucasus, and Central Asia.

¹⁷ Bruce Pannier, "Central Asia: Joint Military Exercise Practices Common Defense," *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty*, March 29, 2000, *The Monitor*, October 19, 2000, *The Fortnight in Review*, 6, no. 20, October 20, 2000.

¹⁸ Barry Buzan, "The Post-Cold War Asia-Pacific Security Order: Conflict or Cooperation?" in Andrew Mack and John Ravenhill (eds.), *Pacific Cooperation: Building Economic and Security Regimes in the Asia-Pacific Region* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1995), 130-38. Interestingly, Russian writers also use this term, as quoted by C. W. Blandy, *Chechnya: Two Federal Interventions and Interim Comparison and Assessment*, Conflict Studies Research Centre, RMA Sandhurst, Camberley, Surrey, 2000, pp. 8-9.

¹⁹ Buzan, 130-38.

²⁰ Mohammad Ayob, "From Regional System to Regional Society: Exploring Key Variables in the Construction of Regional Order," *Australian Journal of International Affairs*, 53, no. 3 (1999):247-60.

²¹ S. Frederick Starr, "The Security Environment of Central Asia," Emirates Lecture Series, no. 22, Emirates Center for Strategic Studies and Research, Abu Dhabi, 1999, p. 24.

²² For the classic definition of such communities, see Karl Deutsch et al., *Political Community and the North Atlantic Area* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957).

are constant causes of instability.²³ Those challenges to security permit foreign intervention which then generally triggers a counter movement by another interested state or states. Thus in 1999 a wave of kidnappings in Kyrgyzstan by Afghan-trained guerillas illustrated Kyrgyzstan's inability to defend itself and triggered a Russian and Chinese countermove to integrate Central Asian militaries and police forces against the threat of terrorism and separatism.²⁴ While such examples highlight linkages between domestic and foreign threats to these states; they also highlight the complexity of factors that lead states to fill up this sacred space.

The Perspectives of the Local and Foreign Powers

Given this context, and their own youth, the new states' main objective is to consolidate their integrity, independence, and sovereignty by diversifying their foreign and defense policies. Therefore, they have welcomed every government that wishes to participate in the region, not just Russia and the United States/NATO. Turkey, on its own and as Washington's staunch ally, plays a major role throughout the area. Indeed, Turkish military and political officials now call Turkey a Caucasian state.²⁵ Similarly, Iran, China, Pakistan, and increasingly India are all active here and are expected to become still more active. Indeed, Pakistan has announced its intention to support Azerbaijan militarily, thereby adding to India's anxieties about Baku's support for Pakistan.²⁶ Japan and to a lesser degree South Korea have measurable interests in the region's oil and natural gas supplies. Israel, either alone or apparently with Turkey, plays a very visible regional role. And Saudi Arabia is also active, mainly through its

support for Wahabbite Muslim religious establishments. The EU has launched an ambitious program to tie Europe to Asia through a transportation corridor that penetrates virtually all the states of Central Asia and the Caucasus, the TRACECA or Silk Road project. And Balkan and East European states—notably Greece, Bulgaria, Romania, Moldova, Ukraine, and Poland—also show considerable interest in regional developments. More recently Kazakhstan and Lithuania started discussing the export of Kazak energy supplies through Lithuania's port at Ventspils to bypass Russia's monopoly over pipelines and ports.

All these relationships illustrate how the local oil and gas producers must diversify their relationships with as many willing partners as possible to retain as much independence and sovereignty as possible. And that means diversifying the routes by which their energy products get to market. Otherwise, they will remain Russia's economic satellites as the only existing pipeline network was built by the Soviet Union to maximize Russian and central control. Lastly the local governments themselves continually seek ways to balance Russian pressures, e.g. GUUAM's discussions on security and guarding pipelines.²⁷

For Moscow our title proverb also denotes its attitude to the region. Essentially Moscow insists this its influence alone must fill this region. Countless Russian statements since 1992 insist that this is a sphere of exclusively Russian interests.²⁸ Otherwise Russia will be marginalized and this area will revert to the influence of alien and hostile powers that threaten Russia's very survival.²⁹ This quintessentially Leninist, if not tsarist, outlook epitomizes the most hard-boiled

²³ Boris Rumer, "In Search of Stability," *Harvard International Review*, 22, no. 1 (Winter/Spring 2000):44-49.

²⁴ Pannier. Of course, by 2000 the guerillas operating in Central Asia and Afghanistan had become the cause of a major international crisis.

²⁵ "Our Aim Is to Strengthen the Turkish Armed Forces by Modernisation," Interview with H. E. Mr. S. Cakmakoglu, Turkish Minister of Defence, *Naval Forces*, no. 6 (1999):35.

²⁶ Moscow, *Kommersant*, in Russian, June 14, 2000, *FBIS SOV*, June 14, 2000; Baku, *Azadlyg*, in Azeri, June 14, 2000, *FBIS SOV*, June 14, 2000.

²⁷ Pannier, *The Fortnight in Review*, October 20, 2000, *The Monitor*, October 19, 2000, *FBIS SOV*, February 16, 2000. For a sign of the geostrategic importance of the TRACECA or Silk Road project, see Leila Alieva, *Reshaping Eurasia: Foreign Policy Strategies and Leadership Assets in Post-Soviet South Caucasus*, Berkeley Program in Soviet and Post-Soviet Studies, Working Paper Series, Winter 2000, pp. 19-20.

²⁸ Dov Lynch, *Russian Peacekeeping Strategies in the CIS: The Cases of Moldova, Georgia, and Tajikistan* (NY: St. Martin's Press, 2000) is replete with such statements.

²⁹ Ibid.

theory of realism in international relations that sees those relations in terms of zero-sum games, the artificiality of small states' sovereignties, and Russia as a power threatened on all sides by powers who seek to take its territory or marginalize it.³⁰

Therefore, Russia views all foreign penetration of the Transcaspian with alarm and reacts increasingly sharply to threats, real or imagined, and its media is saturated with articles depicting NATO enlargement, the formation of the GUUAM, and NATO's campaign in the Balkans as serial threats. For the General Staff, the message was already clear in 1998. Russia had to reply to these threats by force.³¹ As Russia's conception of the state remains an imperial one wedded to notions of a zero-sum game and the tsarist-derived belief that empire and state are coterminous and if there is no empire, there is no state, the resort to force is not surprising.

President Vladimir Putin and leading military officials have repeatedly invoked the domino theory towards Chechnya and the need to crush it by force because this threat was an international one sponsored by a kind of Muslim terrorist international.³² But the decision to go to war against Chechnya was also a signal to NATO and Washington of a resolve to fight local wars, if necessary, to defend Russia's position in the Caucasus. The General Staff's 1998 threat assessment saw Kosovo and Chechnya as two sides of the same coin and tied Kosovo to Chechnya even before NATO actually went to war in Kosovo. This assessment lambasted NATO in November 1998 for desiring to act unilaterally out of area and impose a new world order by bypassing the UN and OSCE. It accused NATO and specifically the United States of going beyond the Washington Treaty and convert NATO into an offensive military bloc that was

expanding its "zone of responsibility" by punitive, military means.³³ Its authors charged:

At the same time, it is not unlikely that NATO could use or even organize crises similar to that in Kosovo in other areas of the world to create an excuse for military intervention since the "policy of double standards" where the bloc's interests dictate the thrust of policy (the possibility of the use of military force in Kosovo against the Yugoslav Army and simultaneous disregard for the problem of the genocide faced by the Kurds in Turkey, the manifestation of "concern" at the use of military force in the Dniester Region, Chechnya, and Nagorno-Karabakh) is typical of the alliance's actions.³⁴

The authors went beyond hinting at renewed fighting in Chechnya to warn NATO openly about Russia's likely reaction to an operation against Serbia. Rather than accept a NATO-dictated isolation from European security agendas and the negating of organizations like the UN and OSCE, Russia would act since this crisis offered NATO an opportunity to project military force not just against Serbia but against Russia itself. Since NATO enlargement's main goal was to weaken Russian influence in Europe and globally the following scenario was likely. "Once our country has coped with its difficulties, there will be a firm NATO ring around it, which will enable the West to apply effective economic, political, and possibly even military pressure on Moscow."³⁵ Specifically,

When analyzing the development of events in the Balkans, parallels with the development of events in the Caucasus involuntarily suggest themselves: Bosnia-Herzegovina is Nagorno-Karabakh; Kosovo is Chechnya. As soon as the West and, in particular, NATO, has rehearsed the "divide and rule" principle in the Balkans under cover of peacekeeping, they should be expected to interfere in the internal affairs of the CIS countries and Russia. It is possible to extrapolate the implementation of "peacekeeping operations" in the region involving military force without a UN Security Council mandate, which could result in the Caucasus being wrested from Russia (it bears mentioning that this applies as well to the independent states of the Transcaucasus an involuntary hint of the

³⁰ For example, *Joseph Stalin, Marxism and the National Question: Selected Writings and Speeches* (NY: International Publishers, 1942), 77.

³¹ Moscow, *Nezavisimoe Voennoe Obozrenie*, in Russian, November 6-12, 1998, *FBIS SOV*, November 9, 1998).

³² Moscow, *Vek* (electronic version), in Russian, November 26, 1999, *FBIS SOV*, November 29, 1999.

³³ *FBIS SOV*, November 9, 1998.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Ibid.

continuing neo-imperial mindset of the General Staff-author) and the lasting consolidation of NATO's military presence in this region, which is far removed from the alliance's zone of responsibility. Is Russia prepared for the development of this scenario? It is obvious that, in order to ensure that the Caucasus does not become an arena for NATO Allied Armed Forces' military intervention, the Russian Government must implement a well defined tough policy in the Balkans, guided by the UN charter and at the same time defending its national interests in the region by identifying and providing the appropriate support for this policy's allies.³⁶

The U.S. view is equally geostrategic and regards access to energy not just as an economic benefit, but strategically. Former high-ranking members of the Clinton Administration state that even if Caspian energy will not equal Saudi holdings, it will be a significant though not determinative factor in global energy. But Caspian energy is crucial to the security and stability of the new states, which is "a vital American interest."³⁷ They are a vital U.S. interest because of the Transcaspian states' proximity to Russia, Iran, Turkey, and China. Their independence constitutes a bulwark against Russian neo-imperialism and a check upon Iranian pretensions to Pan-Islamic anti-Westernism in the Muslim world.³⁸

Therefore, Washington must support these states' independence, develop bilateral regional security relationships, forge relationships between the Partnership for Peace and these states, and create a win-win energy policy based upon multiple pipelines so that no one power dominates the region or excludes anyone else, allowing all these states to share equally in the energy wealth.³⁹ This means breaking Russia's monopolistic policy, multiple pipelines and the creation of stable conditions that would permit the enormous foreign investments needed to bring energy on line.⁴⁰

NATO's and Washington's increasing presence dates from 1994-95 and aimed to counter the threat of a Russian-directed coercive economic-political-military reintegration of the CIS.⁴¹ Since that time Washington has launched a comprehensive economic, political, and military program to integrate these states with the West in all these domains, and preserve multiple energy pipelines, the new states' independence and freedom from any rivals' sphere of influence.⁴² U.S. officials view this area as an alternative or backup to the Middle East, whose volatility constantly threatened energy prices, Western economies, and great power relationships.⁴³ By 1995 crucial decisions to keep Russia from monopolizing the region's energy holdings had been made. In February 1995 Washington decided to support pipelines running through Turkey and not Russia, to break Russia's grip on Central Asia's oil export, help ensure the survival of independent states in the region, and protect U.S. corporate interests.

Consequently, Washington has increasingly become the arbiter of interstate energy issues in the CIS, excluding and rivaling Russia. U.S. officials and diplomats relentlessly pursue a pipeline from Central Asia through the Caspian Sea, Baku, and Georgia to Ceyhan, Turkey, which excludes Russia and Iran (even in the face of compelling economic logic).⁴⁴ Complementing the

⁴¹ Elizabeth Sherwood-Randall, "US Policy and the Caucasus," *Contemporary Caucasus Newsletter*, Berkeley Program in Soviet and Post-Soviet Studies, issue 5, Spring 1998, pp. 3-4.

⁴² Stephen Blank, *U.S. Military Engagement with Central Asia and the Transcaucasus* (Carlisle Barracks: Strategic Studies Institute, US Army War College, 2000).

⁴³ Geoffrey Kemp and Robert Harkavy, *Strategic Geography and the Changing Middle East* (Washington, D.C.:Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1997), xiii; "Introduction," Robert D. Blackwill and Michael Stuermer (eds.), *Allies Divided: Transatlantic Policies for the Greater Middle East* (Cambridge: MIT University Press, 1997), 2.

⁴⁴ Laurent Ruseckas, "US Policy and Caspian Pipeline Politics: The Two Faces of Baku-Ceyhan," Caspian Studies Program Experts Conference Report: Succession and Long-Term Stability in the Caspian Region, Strengthening Democratic Institutions Project, John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, 1999, pp. 119-22.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Conference Report, 10-12.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

focus on energy issues is Washington's leading role in international financial institutions who play a large role in channeling foreign resources to Central Asia. All these activities also contradict the U.S.' stated intention that NATO enlargement and associated trends would not further embroil it in all kinds of local issues. Instead, Washington is the main center of international adjudication of many regional issues.

The Defense Department has discussed strengthening military cooperation with Uzbekistan and Azerbaijan and training Azerbaijan's army, thereby alarming Armenia and Russia.⁴⁵ The Pentagon allocated areas of responsibility (AORs) to U.S. commands for the Transcaspian. In September 1995, U.S. experts on Central Asia cited Washington's extensive interests in Caspian energy as a reason for possibly extending U.S. Persian Gulf security guarantees here.⁴⁶ Indeed, it seems that the Caspian exemplifies the "unipolar moment where Washington can construct and maintain a convivial alignment of international forces. Implicitly it thinks that it can constrain Russian policy here with few or no seriously negative consequences."⁴⁷

U.S. writers increasingly call this area part of the "greater Middle East," the "strategic fulcrum of the future," or the "strategic high ground," due

to its energy resources.⁴⁸ The strategic rationale for American involvement in the Transcaspian's defense and security relations stem from today's new geostrategic situation. "The main reason why the West cannot remain complacent about Russia's actions is the fact that Russia's 'near abroad' is, in many cases, also democratic Europe's near abroad."⁴⁹ However, Washington could relatively easily be drawn into local ethnic conflicts either as peacemaker or peacekeeper. This would accord with the Georgian and Azeri demands noted above for NATO involvement and commitment to their states' interests. The alliance that these states seek with Turkey could indirectly bring the NATO and/or the EU into the fray. If this intervention came to resemble the Kosovo campaign it would trigger Russia's worst nightmare with unforeseeable consequences.

Hitherto Washington has wisely eschewed directly committing U.S. troops to any of the many local conflicts, but that is not a commitment of principle. There are reports of U.S. willingness to send peacekeeping troops should the OSCE's Minsk process bring peace to Nagorno-Karabakh. Clearly American regional military involvement is growing. General John Sheehan (USMC), former CINC of the U.S. Atlantic command (ACOM) and NATO's SACLANT (Supreme Allied Commander Atlantic) announced U.S. willingness to take part in regional peace support operations involving Central Asian forces under UN authorization, further extending Washington's offer of security cooperation to them.⁵⁰

The Transcaspian's heightened importance has already apparently convinced many that challenges to regional security entail threats to our critical or even vital interests. U.S. military analysts frankly state the goals of activities under the rubric of engagement and Partnership for Peace, as essential aspects of the U.S.' strategy of "extraordinary

⁴⁵ Moscow, *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, in Russian, September 13, 1997, *Foreign Broadcast Information Service, Military Affairs* (henceforth FBIS UMLA), 97-259, September 16, 1997; R. Jeffrey Smith, "U.S. Leads Peacekeeping Drill in Kazakhstan," *Washington Post*, September 15, 1997, p. 17; Charles Clover and Bruce Clark, "Oil Politics Trouble Central Asian Waters," *Financial Times*, September 23, 1997, p. 9.

⁴⁶ "If We Clash It'll Be on the Caspian," *Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press* (henceforth CDPP), 27, no. 21, June 21, 1995, p. 21; Dmitri Vertkin, Kazakhstan Security and the New Asian Landscape, *Bairrigg Paper*, no. 26, Centre for Defence and International Security Studies, Lancaster University, 1997, pp. 17-18; Robin Morgan and David Ottaway, "Drilling for Influence in Russia's Back Yard," *Washington Post*, September 22, 1997, pp. A1, 15.

⁴⁷ Douglas Blum, "Sustainable Development and the New Oil Boom: Comparative and Competitive Outcomes in the Caspian Sea," Program on New Approaches to Russian Security, Davis Center for Russian Studies, Harvard University, Working Paper Series, no. 4, 1997, p. 21.

⁴⁸ Kemp and Harkavy, xiii; Blackwill and Stuermer, 2.

⁴⁹ John Roper and Peter van Ham, "Redefining Russia's Role in Europe" in Vladimir Baranovsky (ed.), *Russia and Europe: The Emerging Security Agenda* (Oxford: Oxford University Press for SIPRI, 1997), 517.

⁵⁰ *The Fortnight in Review, Prism*, no. 15, pt. 1, October 1997.

power projection.” These programs include joint exercises, staff visits, training, increasing interoperability, etc. These activities also assist transition to war and, if necessary, participation in its initial stages and perhaps even subsequent combat operations as well.⁵¹ NATO’s increased southern Mediterranean exposure can only increase its prominent institutional role in conflict prevention, security assistance, and military-political integration. Thus in the summer of 1999 NATO began to unify and control the region’s air space, signifying eventual interest in including this area in its operational plans and future membership.⁵²

NATO’s expanding interest reflects the broader process by which the CIS has entered into Europe’s security agenda.⁵³ This too is more than a question of conducting PfP programs and exercises in the region. Turkey’s provision of military training to Central Asian states and Azerbaijan, intention to organize a Caucasian peacekeeping force, and sponsorship of a new stability pact and system are only the most prominent of such examples.⁵⁴ The Greco-Turkish rivalry in the Aegean and Balkans could have been projected into the Middle East and the CIS or exploited by Russia for its own purposes in all these regions and used to block American and Turkish goals; it is not accidental that at the OSCE’s 1999 Istanbul conference American activity revolved around influencing the process of Greco-Turkish negotiations, winning the CIS members to support a pipeline through Baku to Turkey (Ceyhan on the Mediterranean coast) and getting Turkey into the EU’s active consideration for membership. Thus the old Eastern Question has, since 1993, reemerged as the question of the

former Soviet republics’ future destiny; issues of European energy security and geostrategy are now intimately linked to security outcomes in the Transcaspian.⁵⁵ Turkish goals of preventing future Russian military threats and securing its leading influence in a region of the world where it now finds new opportunities for influence since the end of the Cold War coincide with American and NATO strategy. This trend creates great apprehension among certain, though not all, sectors of Russian foreign and defense policymaking.

The Transcaspian Region and Eurasian Regional Security Agendas

This example suggests the imbrication of security agendas in and around the Caspian with those in Europe, the Middle East, and Asia. Pakistan views the region as an essential strategic hinterland in its quest for security against India.⁵⁶ Meanwhile, Indian analysts differ as to whether or not India has invested or should invest considerable resources to stabilize Central Asia against Pakistani designs there. But apparently China, Russia, and the United States each want to enlist India’s influence in Central Asia as a stabilizer against the threat of disintegrating regimes there. Of course, since each actor defines the goals and content of this stabilization differently and clash among themselves, the rivalries around Central Asia are linked to Indo-Chinese tensions, Sino-American rivalries over Asia, and Russia’s ongoing efforts to forge a counter-American strategic triangle with India and China. But simultaneously the joint struggle to contain Afghan-based “terrorism” and insurgency to some degree also unites Washington and Moscow with Delhi.⁵⁷

⁵¹ Roger W. Barnett, *Extraordinary Power Projection: An Operational Concept for the U.S. Navy*, Strategic Research Development Report 5-96, U.S. Naval War College, Center for Naval Warfare Studies, Occasional Papers, Newport, RI, 1996, pp. 7-8.

⁵² Luke Hill and Brooks Tignor, “NATO Reaches to Caucasus,” *Defense News*, August 2, 1999, pp. 3, 19.

⁵³ Blank, “Russia and Europe in the Caucasus,” 622-45.

⁵⁴ Hill and Tignor, 3, 19; *The Monitor*, December 10, 1998; Umit Eginsoy, “Turkish Moves in Caucasus, Balkans Irk Rivals in Region,” *Defense News*, August 3-9, 1998, p. 12.

⁵⁵ Stephen Blank, “The Eastern Question Revived: Russia and Turkey Contend for the New Middle East,” in David Menashri (ed.), *Central Asia Meets the Middle East* (London: Frank Cass Publishers, 1998), 168-88.

⁵⁶ Stephen Blank, *Energy, Economics, and Security in Central Asia: Russia and Its Rivals* (Carlisle Barracks: Strategic Studies Institute, US Army War College, 1995), 23-26.

⁵⁷ C. Raja Mohan, “Fostering Strategic Stability and Promoting Regional Cooperation”; Kanti Bajpai, “India-US Foreign Policy Concerns: Cooperation and Conflict”; Igor Khripunov and Anupam Srivastava, “Contending with the

Consequently, Central Asia, if not the Caucasus, is fully integrated into the whirlpool of inter-Asian security agendas. Since Pakistan- and Afghan-inspired efforts to subvert the current secular governments by supporting Islamic insurgencies grows out of Pakistan's wager on Islamic self-assertion throughout Asia and its own self-projection as an Islamic state and torchbearer, Indian involvement will probably grow.⁵⁸ Meanwhile, Central Asia is already exposed to the unholy trinity of Islamic and ethno-religious insurgencies, drugs, and civil strife. Local leaders must to some extent reckon with the potential for Central and South Asian conflicts to join with each other and become a factor for the possible escalation of Indo-Pakistani hostilities or of the civil wars in Tajikistan, and Afghanistan, or potentially new conflicts in Central Asia. Were any of those contingencies to occur, it is unlikely that Central Asia could escape either the actual or political fallout of a potential Indo-Pakistani conflict.

The Chinese Gambit

Many factors are leading China into a deeper and broader engagement with the Transcaspian region that could eventually collide with the interests of the other major actors there, not excluding Russia. Indeed, some, including this writer, have hypothesized that *in the long term* China might be Russia's most stubborn rival in Central Asia especially if it moves forward while Russia continues to stagnate.⁵⁹ However, if the economic disparity between Beijing and Moscow continues

to widen and accelerates, this rivalry might emerge sooner rather than later for all the talk of bilateral strategic partnership. Already Russia warily limits China's economic engagement in Central Asia whenever it can.⁶⁰ For now, however, China supports Russia's leadership here and that support clearly gratifies Moscow.⁶¹

Nevertheless, China clearly seeks influence over the region in order to play a major, or at least greater, role in world politics. Chinese analyses highlight only some of the fundamental strategic issues for China's future direction in world affairs that will be affected by the rivalry for energy and influence. Xu Xiaojie writes that China has a great opportunity to expand its political and economic position in Asia. Its involvement in the Transcaspian is an important component of this "geopolitical game." Related issues involve U.S.-China relations regarding both governments' Middle Eastern oil supplies, Sino-Russian energy relations, and China's regional role in Northeast, Central, and Southeast Asia. Thus, "China's future geopolitical priority certainly will be to regenerate an aggressive geostrategy that reestablishes a leading role in not just Asia, but the world scene."⁶²

The motives for China's deepening Transcaspian engagement also derive from China's own domestic confrontation with continuous unrest in Xinjiang since 1980, its most intractable domestic threat. China has employed several tactics to forestall this unrest. It has aligned itself with Russia, depriving CIS members of the option of using Russia against China or hiding behind Moscow's support. Second, it has engaged all the Central Asian governments in cross-border

'Bear-ish' Arms Market: US-Indiana Strategic Cooperation and Russia"—all in Gary K. Bertsche, et al. (eds.), *Engaging India: US Strategic Relations with the World's Largest Democracy* (NY: Routledge, 1999), 26, 32-33, 38, 197-98, 245-46; Margaret Coker, "U.S., Russia Worry Poor Central Asia Threatens as Terrorist Breeding Ground," *Cox News Service*, October 17, 2000, www.nexis.com/research/search/documentDisplay?_docnum+121&an:10/18/2000.

⁵⁸ Blank, *Energy, Economics and Security*, 26-30.

⁵⁹ Ibid.; Yuri Peskov, "Russia and China: Problems and Prospects of Cooperation with CIS Members in Central Asia," *Eastern Affairs*, no. 3 (1997):9-23; Guancheng Xing, "China and Central Asia: Towards a New Relationship," in Yongjin Zhang and Rouben Azizian (eds.), *Ethnic Challenges Beyond Borders: Chinese and Russian Perspectives of the Central Asian Conundrum* (NY: St. Martin's Press, 1998), 40-41.

⁶⁰ Shiping Tang, "Economic Integration in Central Asia: The Russian and Chinese Relationship," *Asian Survey*, 40, no. 2 (March-April 2000): 360-76; Philip Andrews-Speed and Sergei Vinogradov, "China's Involvement in Central Asian Petroleum: Convergent or Divergent Interests," *Asian Survey*, 40, no. 2 (March-April 2000):377-95.

⁶¹ "New Strategic Trends in Russo-Chinese Relations," testimony of Professor Stephen J. Blank of the Strategic Studies Institute of the U.S. Army War College to the House Armed Services Committee, 105th Congress, Washington, D.C., July 19, 2000.

⁶² Xu Xiaojie, "China Reaches Crossroads for Strategic Choices," *World Oil*, April 1997, p. 99.

economic relationships, creating webs of dependence to remind them of the risks of upsetting Beijing. Since Shanghai is Kazakhstan's main port and Chinese military might is relatively overt, Kazakhstan and its neighbors have refrained from supporting the insurgents in Xinjiang. At the same time, and as part of the greater strategy of seeking long-term economic influence and access in Central Asia, China has redirected investment to its backward western and northwestern provinces to remove discontent, encourage continuing Han migration into those areas, and drown the insurgents in a Chinese sea.⁶³

The need for energy as domestic sources reach their limits and demand grows has also driven China to buy pipelines going from Kazakhstan to Shanghai and to make major investments in the oil- and gas-bearing states, including Azerbaijan. Since China cannot afford dependence on just one source of energy and must continue its economic progress without interruption, domestic tranquility and economic progress make it imperative that Beijing get into Central Asia and the Transcaspian before others, notably the United States and Japan, who has shown a very strong interest in enhancing its regional profile and gain preeminent influence over regional energy supplies.

Guancheng Xing writes:

For China, a Central Asia which is capable of overcoming its economic difficulties and getting out of its economic crises has a better chance of achieving economic prosperity and political stability. China can benefit greatly from its stable and prosperous neighboring states. Only when Central Asian states are politically stable and economically prosperous can Sino-Central Asian economic cooperation be conducted effectively and smoothly. Such economic cooperation can and will speed up economic development in the Northwest of China. It can therefore be argued that to a large extent the stability and prosperity of Northwest China is closely bound up with the stability and prosperity of Central Asia. It is, rightly, because of this consideration that China advocates and promotes active trade and economic cooperation between China and Central Asian states for common economic prosperity.⁶⁴

China's coherent and comprehensive strategic vision derives from more than economic motives. As he also observed, in its Central Asian policies China pays considerable attention to the Russian factor. China perceives the importance of the Russian tie to Central Asia and seeks to strengthen, not disturb it, because China also sees Russia as a factor of regional stability.⁶⁵ During 1999 two sources contributed to this support for a strong Russian security presence in the area and for strong bilateral cooperation with Moscow as part of the greater Sino-Russian rapprochement.

One of these is China's perception of a threatened "Asian NATO." China discerns the U.S.-Japan-ROK alliance and support for Taiwan that constrains or contains its expanding influence. In Central Asia, Beijing sees the expansion of American and NATO military influence to the Transcaucasus and Central Asia as a threat to its and Russia's influence. Chinese writers rarely, if ever, miss opportunities to warn Russia of Washington's nefarious aims regarding Moscow. Central Asia and the expansion of the Partnership for Peace program exemplify this point.⁶⁶

But this support for Russia's position is conditional upon Russia's military not becoming a threat to China.⁶⁷ Therefore, barbarians should be induced to fight barbarians, i.e., Russia clash with NATO. If Russia aligned with NATO, despite countless Chinese warnings, support for Russia's position in Central (and other parts of) Asia would disappear. Thus Chinese warnings about NATO's actions and threats are not surprising. Meanwhile, China's true attitude towards NATO enlargement is much less hysterical and more cold-blooded.⁶⁸

Thus China supports Central Asian military alignment with Russia because this removes many of its anxieties about Central Asian support for Xinjiang's Muslims or about disputed territories.

⁶⁵ Ibid., 40-41.

⁶⁶ Ibid., 39-40. Michael Pillsbury, *China Debates the Future Security Environment* (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, 2000), passim.

⁶⁷ Guancheng Xing, 40-41, and idem., "Security Issues in China's Relations with Central Asian States," in Zhang and Azizian (eds.), 215.

⁶⁸ Czeslaw Tubilewicz, "Comrades No More: Sino-Central European Relations After the Cold War," *Problems of Post-Communism*, 46, no. 2 (March-April 1999), 9-10.

⁶³ Guancheng Xing, 44-45.

⁶⁴ Ibid., 35.

In 1999 the assassination attempts against Uzbek President Karimov, Islamic insurgencies in Kyrgyzstan supported by Afghan and Pakistani forces, the Chechen war, and the disturbed situation whereby Central Asian governments now seem disposed to discern new anti-government plots greatly alarmed Moscow, Beijing, and local governments and stimulated Russo-Chinese moves for renewed cooperation against "terrorism." Moscow hopes to use these activities as a lever to promote rejuvenated military integration of Central Asia with Russia and firmer Sino-Russian military-political cooperation to put Central Asia "on ice." This cooperation goes beyond the five power border treaty of 1996 which adjusted all borders between Central Asia and China and between Russia and China and the regular meetings of high-level officials from all states. This anti-terrorist coalition clearly has broader strategic aims than simply stabilizing the status quo in Central Asia.⁶⁹

China is also stepping up its visibility in the Caucasus. In 1999 it was caught selling missiles to Armenia. Azerbaijan's strong protests ultimately forced Beijing to apologize, much as it had done to the United States with regard to Pakistani nuclear projects, and claim this will not happen again. More likely, however, as in Pakistan, there will be more such examples. Perhaps China did so at the behest of Armenia and Russia. The Sino-Russian strategic cooperative partnership gives every sign of developing into a broader strategic coordination between the two governments. Russia and Armenia may have asked China to make the sale to spare Russia from complications with Azerbaijan due to its earlier transfer of a billion dollars worth of weapons to Armenia which raised a great deal of trouble for Russia in its domestic politics and even more with Baku. As Azeri-based oil was about to come on stream and negotiations for a final decision on the routes or pipelines through which that oil would flow were about to begin, China seemed an appropriate conduit.

A second explanation that does not contradict this first one is that this sale coincided with China's desire to establish a foothold in the area,

although it is still unclear why Beijing would go out of its way to antagonize a potential source of oil and gas. A third possibility is that the "princes," members of the families of China's ruling elites, who control arms sales can to some degree act on their own in such matters. While we cannot know the reason for this sale for certain, it signifies China's deepening military involvement with the Transcaspian. China is not only upgrading its trade and economic relations with Central Asia, it is also buying into energy fields and pipelines to stake its claim to leverage over those assets, pursuing influence in Central Asia, guaranteeing its own energy sufficiency in the face of rising demand, and suppressing domestic insurgency by a subtle policy tying domestic and foreign security policies. China is moving to fulfill Xu Xiaojie's blueprint and win an established role as a key player here.⁷⁰

As Central Asia's destiny may be increasingly linked with that of East and/or South Asia the ultimate strategic implications of that trend remain undefined. But we can safely assert that Beijing is not only determined to have an enduring voice in the final disposition of the Transcaspian as a strategic region, but has also begun to act on that determination.

The Middle East

Similar prospects are visible in the Middle East. As Azeri efforts to involve Israel and Turkey in an alliance system against Moscow, Athens, and Tehran suggest, regional alignments here can spill over into Middle Eastern alignments or vice versa and involve rivals in one "theater" in conflicts in the second theater. Even if we consider the new states as part of the new Middle East, they clearly bring a different baggage and agenda into Middle Eastern politics. Their generally good relations with Israel stem from the practical needs that Israel can satisfy. Israel has valuable economic and domestic development experience and capabilities, most notably with regard to the pressing water problems that afflict Central Asia. Good relations with Israel also open doors in Washington. Israeli military assistance may also be

⁶⁹ Blank, *Testimony*.

⁷⁰ Xu Xiaojie, 99.

highly regarded, especially as all these states share enmity with fundamentalist Islamic forces. Those governments who suspect Iran's ultimate intentions also might be inclined to gravitate to Iran's strongest rival in the Middle East. Moreover, as the Central Asian governments are all anti-fundamentalist (i.e., against the politicization of Islam) they reject Iran's periodic calls for a more Islamic foreign policy. As Iran has all but signed an alliance with Christian Armenia against Azerbaijan, these states see Iran's self-interest in such calls.

Nevertheless, Iran has been remarkably circumspect here, relying since 1999 primarily on economic ties to win influence. Iran has periodically offered its infrastructure and whatever economic benefits it can provide to Central Asian energy producers. But on the key issues of pipelines and the legal character of the Caspian Sea it has firmly supported Russia against Washington, Azerbaijan, and Kazakhstan. Tehran aims to stifle Azerbaijani irredentism concerning the large Azeri minority in Northern Iran, and not to antagonize Russia, its main military benefactor, while Washington resolutely seeks to isolate it. Indeed, Russian support for Iranian nuclearization stems not just from its defense and nuclear industries' desperate need for revenues, but also from the well-founded belief that if it does not provide military assistance, Iran could create many difficulties for Russia here. This realization dates from February 1992, i.e., the founding days of Russian statehood.⁷¹

While Iranian media remain very troubled about the war in Chechnya, official Iran remains on Russia's side in this conflict, at least publicly.⁷² This strategic marriage of convenience shows how strategic factors in the CIS affect one of the oldest and most solidly established relations in the Middle East, namely the Russo-Iranian

relationship, helping convert it from one of almost unceasing conflict and mutual suspicion into a lively and developing amity and strategic partnership.

On the other hand, Iran is currently undergoing a struggle between moderates and more hardline elements. This struggle clearly revolves in some measure around Iranian attitudes towards the United States and its desperate economic weakness. If the moderates and exponents of an economic rationale for policy and rapprochement with Washington prevail, Washington will reciprocate by expanding support for diverse pipelines to include Iran, the most economically rational option in the pipeline equation. That would trigger a major and profoundly consequential geopolitical shift in Iranian policy away from support for Russia and China whose regional implications could equal those of Iran's 1979 revolution.

Iranian Nuclearization and the Transcaspian Region

However, perhaps the most unpredictable risk factors facing the entire area are the consequences of Iran's impending nuclear capability. U.S. military and political authorities agree that within a decade, if not earlier, Iran will have a functioning nuclear weapon and delivery system.⁷³ Iran is reportedly working on developing IRBMs to extend its reach into Europe and Asia and even ICBMs for potential use against the United States itself.⁷⁴

Almost all speculation and analysis concerning Iranian capabilities has focused on the Middle East and Europe, ignoring the impact of Iranian nuclearization on Central Asia or the Caucasus. A nuclear Iran with unresolved but long-smoldering domestic struggles, thinking that it can deter resistance, could well be tempted into foreign policy adventures to achieve domestic aims and aggrandize its influence abroad. While Russia and China have been among the main supports of

⁷¹ Stephen Blank, "Russia and Iran in a New Middle East," *Mediterranean Quarterly*, 3, no. 4 (Fall 1992):124-27.

⁷² Tehran, Iran, in English, February 20, 2000, *Foreign Broadcast Information Service, Near East and South Asia*, (henceforth *FBIS NES*), February 20, 2000; Robert O. Freedman, "Russian-Iranian Relations Under Yeltsin," Paper presented at the Sixth Annual ASN Convention, Columbia University, April 14, 2000.

⁷³ James Risen and Judith Miller, "CIA Tells Clinton an Iranian A-Bomb Can't Be Ruled Out," *New York Times*, January 17, 2000, p. 1; Associated Press, February 29, 2000.

⁷⁴ *FBIS UMLA*, 98-075, March 17, 1998.

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Iran's nuclearization, quite possibly neither government might view Iranian and/or Pakistani nuclearization positively, given the repercussions in Xinjiang and Central Asia. Such factors should give us a sense of how the rest of Asia might be affected by Iranian nuclearization.

Neglect of Central Asian threat scenarios if Iran gains nuclear capabilities is partly attributable to the fact that the pace, direction, and extent of Iran's overall rearmament and acquisition of weapons of mass destruction greatly depends upon foreign sales or transfers. Because of constant U.S. and other pressure that is exerted upon Russia and other providers it will be difficult, if not impossible to forecast what Iran's capabilities will be, how much of any single capability it will have, and when it gains those capabilities.

Iran's numerous and well-known difficulties in maintaining and servicing its existing weapons systems or in obtaining parts for aging U.S. systems also precludes easy assumptions concerning the pace, direction, timing, and extent of future Iranian military power and strategy. Iran also may not have thought deeply about the strategic potentials and possible missions it will confront once it reaches the point of acquiring usable WMD. Nevertheless, Iran clearly seeks both regional hegemony and to avail itself of a credible deterrent capability primarily against those states it identifies as an actual or potential threat, Israel, Iraq, and the United States.

Will Iran use it to attempt nuclear blackmail against a Transcaucasian and/or Central Asian state? Will the United States or some other great power be able to extend its deterrence against Iran to that threatened state, and if so how? After all, in almost all these states there are actual or potentially secessionist ethno-religious or political minorities which Iran can use to destabilize the target state. If Lebanon is an example, the further away the target state is from Iran, the bolder Iran is in extending military, political, intelligence, and economic support to groups like Hezbollah. The Transcaspian's unsettled situations already present tempting opportunities for engaging in such policies. Although Iran has hitherto been very circumspect, if it has a functioning and viable deterrent it might use one or more of these

minorities, as it has used Hezbollah, and even threaten the state that seeks to undertake reprisals against them with extended deterrence on behalf of its "clients."

Will possession of usable nuclear weapons therefore lead Iran to support secessionist minorities elsewhere in the region in the belief that even other nuclear states are deterred by its capability? There are precedents for this that go beyond Lebanon. For example, Pakistan apparently employs a similar logic in its incitement of conflicts in Kashmir. Undoubtedly such concerns are warranted as no Central Asian state has truly secure borders or legitimacy and they all face real threats of ethnic secessionist wars that could draw in larger powers. Indeed, Iran constantly worries about Azerbaijan reuniting with Iranian Azerbaijan. If one adds a nuclear power to the ethnopolitical mix, regional security issues will become more complex and harder to resolve.

Indeed, Iran and Russia might part ways if Iran's nuclear capability becomes perceived as a threat to Russia. Alternatively Irano-Pakistani rivalry in Afghanistan might lead Iran to play a secessionist card against either Moscow or Islamabad in the belief of its essential invulnerability to serious retribution. If any of those rivalries grow over time, Iran's nuclear potential would exert considerable influence upon Central Asia. Inasmuch as many analysts concur that possession of nuclear weapons makes the world safe for conventional warfare, the temptation to use such weapons to assert Iranian objectives in Central Asia or the Transcaucasus might prove too strong to resist.

Neither does the scenario of a more aggressive Iran, and not only in the Gulf and Middle East, stop with these questions. We can already see Iran becoming a "second-tier" proliferator to other states. Since Pakistan had assisted Iraq's fledgling nuclear program, so might Iran decide to become an international proliferator and exporter.⁷⁵ Iran and its potential partners could constitute two simultaneous fronts against American or some other power in widely separated theaters to deter

⁷⁵ This point is based on conversations with Daniel Goure of the Center for Strategic and International Studies, Washington, D.C., April 2000.

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U.S. or allied intervention and could make the mutual proliferation of weapons of mass destruction the basis of their own coalitional activities.

Until now Central Asian states have successfully avoided nuclear entanglements and created a nuclear free zone with great power support from Moscow and Beijing. But will a nuclear Iran agree to this nuclear weapons free zone? And if it does not, what will then happen to that zone and what pressures might be unleashed within Central Asia or the CIS as a whole, or South Asia to react to Iran's accretion of power?

Likewise, we cannot know what the ultimate configuration of Iranian forces will be or what kind of doctrine it will choose. India's recently published nuclear doctrine speaks of a stable deterrent and second-strike capability, language that strongly implies it is moving towards a large, robust nuclear force with a triad of land-, sea-, and air-based delivery systems or missiles for those weapons.⁷⁶ India is also apparently starting down the road of ballistic missile defenses to preserve its deterrent's credibility and is greatly expanding its space program to provide for a potential reconnaissance and/or strike capability either in space or from earth to space.⁷⁷

⁷⁶ Raju G. C. Thomas, "Missile Programs and the Indian Nuclear Deterrent," *Proceedings from the Conference on Countering the Missile Threat, International Military Strategies* (Washington, D.C.: Jewish Institute for National Security Affairs, 1999), 178-80; "Pakistan Tests New Missile and Revises Command Structure," *Jane's Defence Weekly*, February 16, 2000, p. 3; Pravin Sawhney, "How Inevitable Is an Asian 'Missile Race'?" *Jane's Intelligence Review*, January 2000, pp. 30-34; Hilary Synnott, "The Causes and Consequences of South Asia's Nuclear Tests," *Adelphi Papers*, no. 332 (1999):30-34, 45-46, 53-65.

⁷⁷ Steven Lee Myers, "Russia Helping India Extend Range of Missiles, Aides Say," *New York Times*, April 27, 1998, p. 1; Bangalore, *Deccan Herald* (internet version), in English, December 23, 1998, *FBIS NES*, December 23, 1998; Daniel Goure, "WMD and Ballistic Missiles in South Asia," *Report of the Commission to Assess the Ballistic Missile Threat to the United States*, July 15, 1998, Pursuant to Public Law 201, 104th Congress, Appendix 3, Unclassified Working Papers, 1998, pp. 151-58; David R. Tanks, "Ballistic Missiles in South Asia: Are IBMs a Future Possibility?" *ibid.*, 317-31; Henry Sokolski, "Space Technology Transfers and Missile Proliferation," *ibid.*, 303-15; Richard H. Speier, Testimony Before the Subcommittee on International Security Proliferation and Federal Services, Committee on

Iran might conceivably move in the same direction and trigger a massive destabilization throughout much of Asia. Over time, and if Iranian proliferation remains essentially unimpeded, a relatively robust, diversified Iranian force, complete with second-strike capability and aspirations to a missile defense and space weapons and/or reconnaissance system might come into being. Here again we have not begun to imagine what the consequences might be for Transcaspien governments, India, Pakistan, or even for Russia and China under such circumstances. Certainly some thought should be given to these possibilities.

Even if the rest of the CIS remains non-nuclear, Iran's forthcoming entry into the nuclear club will create a third or fourth (including Pakistan) regional player in the Transcaspien, which has both nuclear weapons and vital strategic interests at stake in the region. Is it too much to assume that the connection between those two phenomena and regional security will grow and affect every government in these regions or that has important interests there? If nothing else, the strategic competition for regional influence will probably intensify and the margin for action by any one external actor, including the United States, which has important energy and security interests in these areas, will diminish probably by an amount corresponding to the increased complexity of regional international interactions.

To the extent that Central Asia and the Transcaucasus are interlinked with other geostrategic zones of importance, South Asia, Europe, the CIS, or the Middle East, the spillover of conflicts from one region into another can create opportunities for the use of nuclear weapons as a political or even military instrument of policy. Azerbaijani calls for an alliance of NATO, Israel and the United States against Russia, Greece, Armenia, and Iran exemplifies the possibilities that may then arise by mixing up all these regions' security agendas into one large interconnected crisis.

Governmental Affairs, U.S. Senate, June 5, 1997.

Conclusions

Current international trends will probably continue the processes that are fusing CIS and other security agendas. NATO enlargement is the greatest manifestation of this fusion of security agendas for it brings NATO and the possible use of NATO forces closer to the new Middle East. And the U.S. unilateral supervision of the Arab-Israeli peace process follows close behind in importance as a factor bringing Europe and the Middle East together while also bypassing Russia. Russia's eclipse as a major power has been the key factor that has ensured the relative smoothness of these processes. And in Asia the rise of China and intensified rivalry in South Asia are also in part results of Russia's decline. Hence Moscow's alarm lest its eclipse become permanently inscribed in world politics at the very moment when it stands revealed as a failed state.

Yet other future threats, not even counting these states' long-enduring structural internal pathologies also threaten Transcaspian stability and security. The commingling of ethnopolitical and religious identities in violent conflicts added to possible external support for the insurgents immensely complicates efforts to maintain peace here and is a convenient instrument in the hands of foreign and regional states who see something to gain by destabilizing neighboring regimes. Therefore, any disturbance of the regional status quo provides a basis for bilateral and trilateral cooperation among interested governments, particularly Russia, China, and India.

While the disturbances of 1999, assassination attempts, insurgencies, etc. cannot in and of themselves cement a triple alliance among these states, certainly "terrorism" and Islamic insurgency drives them together and enhances their

propensity to cooperate at American expense. Yet it is the regimes that America has supported, e.g., Islam Karimov's rule in Uzbekistan, whose policies breed and or perpetuate the conditions that make turbulence and external cooperation among Moscow, Delhi, and Beijing possible.

Moreover, the proximity of Central Asia and the Transcaucasus to the centers of the drug trade in Afghanistan and Pakistan guarantee that funding for insurgency in Central Asia will not abate. There are numerous allegations of Chechen involvement in the drug trade and for some time drug money, gun running, and religious-political agitation have marched hand in hand in Pakistan.⁷⁸

Thus when one adds up all the threats to security, internal and external, it becomes clear that this sacred place will not remain empty. Nor is it likely that the internal or external order within and among local states will easily remain peaceful. Since so many of the players now define their Transcaspian interests as vital, it is entirely possible that both they and internal insurgents may not only come to see the region as a holy one but will regard the conflicts they provoke and react to as holy ones as well.

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The views expressed here do not represent the views of the U.S. Army, Department of Defense, or the U.S. Government.

⁷⁸ Stephen Blank, "Central Asia, South Asia and Asian Security," *Eurasian Studies* (Ankara), 2, no. 3 (1995):2-22.

Baku-Ceyhan Journal 2000

Dodge Billingsley

Day 1, Heading West

Baku, Azerbaijan, the gathering place for our unlikely caravan. The plan is to ride the route of the proposed Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan oil pipeline, nearly 1000 miles, on motorcycles. Not any motorcycles, but Soviet/Russian made Urals with sidecars. We are more than a dozen, from the United States, United Kingdom, Georgia, Azerbaijan, Turkey and other states. Some of us are very familiar with the region while this will be the first time for others.

After days of preparation, the caravan departed from Baku for the Neftalan Oil Bath Sanitarium in Geranboy Province, approximately 250 kilometers from Baku. Neftalan is the last functioning sanitarium specializing in the famous "white oil" therapeutic baths that attracted hundreds of thousands of Soviet-era health seekers. Today, all other sanatoria are filled with refugees from the war with Armenia over the Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Oblast. Nearly three-quarters of a million refugees have been moved from Karabakh and surrounding areas as a result of the conflict which began in the late 1980s. A ceasefire has more or less held since 1994 but there is still no resolution to this conflict.

Day 2, Reaching Georgia

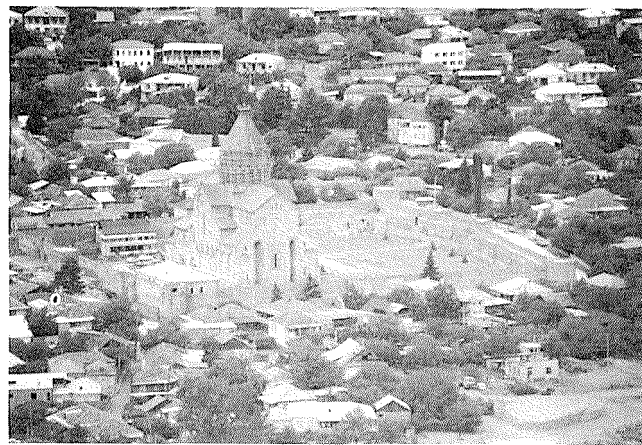
We rode the remaining 250 kilometers up the Baku-Supsa pipeline into the Georgian capital of Tbilisi to establish camp. Camp is a relative term since the Tbilisi Metechi Sheraton Hotel is one of, if not, the most luxurious hotels in Georgia. However, it has a past that is sordid and indicative of the country in which it is located. Back in the early 1990s, it was a gathering place for local mobsters and strongmen. Such notables as Dzhaba Ioseliani, the leader of the Mekhedrioni paramilitary organization, were known to frequent the hotel. After repeated

gunplay, a metal detector and a gun check were installed in the lobby. Eventually, "rule of law" has begun to prevail in Georgia and with it the hotel has become less of an underworld attraction. In fact, visitors today wouldn't have any idea of its past were it not for the metal detector.

Day 3, Shevardnadze

Today it was off to see Tbilisi and a visit with Georgian President Eduard Shevardnadze. Later that evening I met with two friends from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. We talked politics and they recalled a cartoon that has become somewhat popular. It shows Shevardnadze asking his grandson what he wants to be when he grows up. The boy replies, "President of Georgia." Shevardnadze is perplexed and asks the boy why Georgia would need two presidents. In the final frame the boy has gone missing. The implication is obvious.

It is amazing to me that Shevardnadze is still alive. He has been the target of multiple assassination attempts. I remember seeing him on the news, all bloodied after a near fatal



Looking down on the historic capital of Georgia.

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attempt a few years ago. He is definitely a survivor. What will happen to Georgia when he is gone is anyone's guess.

Georgia has had its share of conflicts since it declared independence in 1991 under the direction of Zviad Gamsakhurdia. It has fought a war on the streets of the capital, known as the Tbilisi War, between Gamsakhurdia's men and those loyal to Tengiz Kitovani and Dzhaba Ioseliani, a war with ethnic Ossetians, and finally a war in its western territory of Abkhazia. In addition, Armenian unrest south of the capital and strained relations with Adjara on Georgia's southern Black Sea coast still linger as potential trouble spots. Georgia could still explode into open conflict. However, I think that every year that passes in relative peace is a good sign for the country.

The rest of the day was spent arguing about the route we should take from Tbilisi to the Georgian-Turkish border. Some in the group were concerned about security and the fact that the southern route passes through the Armenian enclaves of Georgia. Tensions have been semi-constant in these areas. Two years ago government units on "routine exercises" were stopped from entering the predominantly Armenian Marneuli district by the local leadership. Tensions are still high and mistrust between the Georgian government and the Armenian regions never seems to abate. During the war in Abkhazia (1992-1994) Armenian citizens of Georgia found themselves caught in the middle. There were ethnic Armenians fighting on the Abkhaz side so many Armenians in other parts of Georgia felt compelled to join the war effort on the Georgian side as a sign of loyalty to the state. They were concerned that the presence of Armenians on the Abkhaz side would lead to retribution against Armenians in other parts of Georgia.

Day 4, Getting Caught

We hadn't gone a mile from the hotel and the trailer blew another tire. It has been a chronic problem so far and there has been some heated discussions whether or not we should leave it behind. Anyway, the convoy became separated and instead of a tight unit moving through the

streets of Tbilisi, most of the motorcycles went on ahead while I and a few of the bikes stayed with the trailer. It was boring to hang out while they changed the tire so I walked out to the bridge. (We were just to the point of crossing the river to get to Rustaveli Street—the main avenue and the location of most of the Tbilisi War mentioned earlier.) I had only been on the bridge for a couple of minutes filming traffic passing on a street below when a car pulled up. Plainclothes officers immediately detained me. A police van pulled up and then another car arrived with someone who seemed to be in charge. They asked for my documents and the camera. I tried to tell them that I was with the motorcycle group and pointed to the chaos surrounding the trailer, only a hundred yards away.

It turns out the road I was filming below, which runs parallel to the river and is known as the President's Road, was the street of the most recent attempt on Shevardnadze's life. So now, illogically, it is forbidden to take any photos of the street—at all. After some discussion it was decided that I could leave with my camera but I would first have to erase the shots I had taken from the bridge.

We headed west along the old M-27 military highway, towards Gori, Stalin's hometown. There was the usual bit of confusion as no one was told that at the junction, instead of turning south towards Gori, we would turn north toward the breakaway region of South Ossetia and its capital Ts'khinvali to eat lunch at a restaurant a mile or so up the road. Half of the group went south, the other north. Eventually though, everybody made it to the restaurant.

Not far from the restaurant we could see an orange marker indicating the Baku-Supsa oil pipeline. The Georgian state oil company (GIOC) official traveling with us told us that if we went to the marker we would be detected and security would be sent out to see what we were doing. I find it hard to believe. An acquaintance of mine, a pipeline engineer, told me that they have found over one thousand illegal taps on the pipeline. Its humorous to me that there is so much Russian attention to the illegal taps the Chechens make on the pipeline running through their territory as one of the pretexts for Russian military action in the area, when corruption in



Statue of Stalin in central Gori

Georgia still seems unrivaled. During the early 1990s this was definitely the case. Everything was for sale. Even foreign aid, food and clothes, often turned up missing and then showed up for sale in local markets.

Finally, Gori, Stalin's birthplace. There is a massive Stalin museum in central Gori, built at the exact location of the home of his birth. A large statue of Stalin—the ultimate Soviet ghost—stands in the central square, a reminder of the contradictions of the region. Stalin still has quite a following in Georgia despite the brutality that characterized his regime. He may have been a butcher, but he was their butcher. Oddly, the museum dedicated to his life, mysteriously left out much of 1941 and 1942, when the Nazis steamrolled into the Soviet Union, wiping out much of the Soviet military and almost reaching Moscow.

Our arrival in Bakuriani this evening happened to coincide with a retreat for the Georgian Parliament led by the number two man in Georgia, Zurab Zvania. Between food and drink there was some serious debate regarding corruption. Apparently the Parliament went through 19 checkpoints between Tbilisi and Bakuriani. The checkpoints are little more than a way for the local police to extort bribes. Georgia, like many places in the former Soviet Union, is trying to redefine itself. Accessible transit routes, whether for oil or people, are critical to

development in Georgia. Too many checkpoints, especially those thrown up to demand payment for passage are bad for business—any business. By way of comparison, it was also noted that between Tbilisi and the Armenian border there are another ten checkpoints, while there are not any between the border and the Armenian capital Yerevan.

According to a Bertling Caspian official, the bribe taking in Georgia is chronic and is even categorized as official and non-official. Official bribes being those that are accompanied by a receipt while non-official bribes are strictly under the table. Some multi-national companies have even developed a special formula for figuring out what it costs to do business in Georgia.

Day 5, Confrontation

After a bike check we were on our way back to the main road and to the southern city of Akhalts'khke. The detour to Bakuriani was very scenic. The small road through high-mountain passes reminded me how beautiful this country really is, and what it might eventually become. However, stability remains an issue. We stopped at a small village and when I began to take pictures a man grabbed me. I thought it was a friendly embrace, but it was soon obvious that the man meant to fight. He was quickly subdued by other bystanders once they realized that I was being attacked. It happened so quickly that it still seems strange that it even occurred. It reminded me of how quick the situation can turn ugly. In 1995 I left my apartment in Tbilisi one day to return to find that the others with me had been tied up and robbed. There wasn't much money so they beat one of my friends with the butt of their weapons. It happened just like that.

Everywhere there were ample signs of the decaying Soviet-era infrastructure. Abandoned buildings and trains sit empty and rusty, in stark contrast to the natural beauty of the land. Eventually, we made it to Akhalts'khke. We were not going straight to Turkey, however. We detoured again, this time in a southeasterly direction, paralleling the Georgian Turkish border. Our objective, to camp below the Vardzia cave house complex. It was an impressive route. The canyon road on which we

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traveled was flanked by signs of hundreds of years of civilization. There were stone lookouts perched on strategic hilltops every few kilometers, an advance warning system against foreign invaders. We soon came to Khertvissi Fort, a massive structure on the north side of the narrow valley commanding views in both directions.

A half-hour later we gazed at the impressive Vardzya cave complex. Built hundreds of years ago, they were completely hidden, and used as a place to live and fight foreign invaders using the narrow valley to gain access into Georgian lands. Apparently, the cave's existence was forgotten. Eventually, a massive earthquake caused the whole front of the canyon wall to collapse, revealing the enormous cave city built into the side of the mountain.

This was my first night in an actual camp and I realized that I should have brought my own sleeping arrangements. Yes, there was an extra tent, cushion and sleeping bag, but the barrel of oil—the actual barrel of Caspian crude, to be delivered to Ceyhan, leaked all over everything. Eventually, I found a couple white blankets that were pretty clean and used them instead of a sleeping bag.

Day 6, Ethnic Rivalries

After a fitful night's sleep on what I thought were white blankets, but turned out to be large fiber glass pads with which to wrap the motorcycles for shipment back from Turkey, we backtracked past the Khertivissi Fort and again into Akhalts'skhe. It is a dusty town only 10 kilometers from the Turkish border. One of the bolts holding the suspension in place vibrated out of one of the bikes and we were once again left waiting while a local machine shop went to work to manufacture a replacement.

It began to rain hours later as we finally left town for a campsite near the border. It wasn't too far, but we were getting pretty wet. I more than others as I was riding in a sidecar and my driver chose to go through every mud and rain filled pothole he could find—both because it was there and he was more than a bit drunk. After being drenched I opted to ride in one of the support vehicles. He rolled his bike a few

minutes later.

Seven kilometers between Akhalts'skhe and the border is the small village of Vale. Half its population is ethnic Armenian. Our plan was to camp near the village and then ride across the border the next day. However, our Azerbaijan state oil company (SOCAR) officials, ethnic Azeris, refused to camp anywhere near Vale. They had gotten it in their head that Armenians might try to capture the symbolic barrel of Azeri crude oil while we camped.

Apparently, this would be a tremendous loss of face politically. Nearly everyone else agreed that their suspicions were ridiculous. Some confusion and confrontation followed after which a compromise was reached. It was decided to move our camp a kilometer or so closer to the border, and closer to the watchful eyes of border security personnel. In the end the SOCAR officials decided it was too wet outside and they decided to spend the night out of the mud and back in Akhalts'skhe.

Day 7, Turkey

It rained all night. Finally, morning came and the sun. I hoped it wouldn't rain today since most of our stuff was completely soaked. There was a slab of cheese stuck to the side of one of the tents, having stuck right where one of the guys threw it the previous evening trying to see if anyone would even notice. It was funny that it hadn't slid to the ground.

Eventually, after a very small fire made from petrol from the bikes, I walked down to a petrol station near the border and looked around for something to burn. There was a lot of scrap wood from a building being built across the street, so we scrounged up as much as we could carry and headed back to camp. The fire was much better now. I was actually getting warm and drying out some of my wet clothes. There was nothing to eat so everyone tinkered with the bikes and did their own thing. We weren't due to enter Turkey until 2 pm when the Turkish officials showed up to welcome us.

The border crossing went smoothly. We entered Turkey via the Turkgozu Customs entrance opened in 1995. After a brief ceremony we traveled until dark and reached the city of

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Oltu. We were behind schedule and did not get as far as planned, so our new escorts, Turkish police and petroleum company officials, scrambled around town to get us rooms at various hotels. I think my bill came to about \$6.00.

Day 8, The Kurds

We awoke to the 75th anniversary of the Turkish Republic and the sound of tanks in the streets. They were part of a larger armada honoring the country's anniversary, but as one Turkish bystander admitted, "this is a show of force, a demonstration of power not to be lost on the local Kurdish population." He then pointed out Kurds among the resident Turks.

Day 9, Blue Berets

The military presence was noticeably heavier in Turkey. The region that the pipeline would travel has, until recently, been the scene of a fierce counter-insurgency operation to eliminate the Kurdish PKK. Just before passing the village of Besseray we passed a military base on the left. Artillery was positioned under camouflage netting next to rows of trucks and APCs.

Five minutes later, about 35 kilometers from Kamah, we came to a military checkpoint manned by soldiers wearing blue berets. It reminded me of the checkpoints that characterize Russia's presence in Dagestan or along the Inguri River border separating Abkhazia from the rest of Georgia. Stop signs were placed to divert traffic flow past a fortified sandbag bunker, then past a parked armored personnel vehicle and finally, past another fortified sandbag bunker on the left side of the road.

Eventually we made it to Ilic, but not before passing another military base, the largest so far, perched on the hill across from the town. The military escort that accompanied us most of the morning handed us over to a new unit. We didn't even turn off the bikes. Soon it was across the river and into Ilic.

In Ilic, our lunch stop, we met Turkish intelligence personnel. They explained that now that the terrorist threat is diminished the people are beginning to come back to Ilic. Apparently, it



Turkish military personnel in Ilic

was depopulated as a result of the local insurgency. I took a walk through town while I was waiting for lunch—followed by military personnel the whole time. There was another military base at the end of the street. The whole town seemed to be garrisoned.

The road out of Ilic was dirt. There would be no pavement for much of the day. Shortly after leaving Ilic our military escort handed us over to a blue berets unit. It consisted of two eight-man teams in Turkish-made Otocar trucks with parallel benches running lengthwise up the center of the truck bed. The soldiers sat with their backs to each other facing outward on both sides of the vehicle. The unit commander sat in the cab with the driver. One soldier carried a machine gun. There was a sniper and the rest were equipped with assault rifles. Although the commander of the unit stated clearly that, "our presence here is to show everybody that the Turkish Republic is secure and united," his very presence seemed to demonstrate that the area was not secure.

The terrain is pretty rugged and barren. It's a wonder that an insurgency could take place here because there is no place to hide, or is there? I remember the Vardzya cave houses in southern Georgia. Then again, a Turk in Ilic told me that the "terrorists" are hidden in homes in every town. Ironically, the river we've been following

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for most of the day is the headwater of the Euphrates, a traditional conflict line by the time it reaches the Middle East.

At one point we raced ahead of the caravan, across the dusty choking road, to take pictures. I hiked up to a good vantage point and looked around. There was nothing but endless landscape as far as I could see, but just in case I took off my Turkpetro shirt because I didn't want to be mistaken for an employee of a state-owned company and targeted as a result.

I'm surprised how under-developed this part of Turkey is, compared to western and northern regions in which I have traveled. Turkey is in a catch 22, if they modernize the area it might empower the restless Kurdish minority that lives here. There are signs that the government is trying to modernize the region. The road is under construction and looks to be paved. Simple improvements like this may go a long way to win the hearts and minds of the people here and may eventually establish peace in the region. Eventually the barren hillsides turned to wheat fields and the look of prosperity.

We lost our commando escort and picked up lesser forces once we reached paved road. One of the Turks told me that there are at least three types of military forces and our escort is determined by our location. We are under the control, or protection, of the police in the cities, under the direction of the Gendarme on the outskirts, and under the control of the military in the countryside.

We were going to stay in Kangal but our Turkish Botas officials are concerned about the number of miles we have to make up tomorrow. As a result, it was decided to continue in the dark as far as Gurun. Again we filled up all the available hotel rooms in the small town. The room was small and crowded, but the beds were comfortable and at only \$3 per person it was a bargain. The bathroom was at the end of the hall, as usual.

Day 10, Crash

The next day began without a hitch. We stopped for lunch in Saimbeyli and I bought a small, hand-made carpet. We were ahead of schedule for a change and optimistic of finally

making camp before dark. Disaster struck just before we reached Feke. Our Turkish driver went over the edge and tumbled a hundred feet down a steep precipice. He came to a stop in a thicket.

Remarkably, an ambulance was in Feke and it arrived in minutes. It took us a half an hour to get him up to the road. There was a confrontation with some Turkish press as many of the riders were emotional and not in the mood for aggressive press coverage. Some felt that it might have been the press that caused the ill-fated driver to drive beyond his capabilities and go over the edge.

It is amazing that only his legs were broken. He and the bike were mangled. He could have easily been killed. His right leg was pretty bad and the doctors later said that they thought they might have had to amputate. Fortunately, after hours in surgery, they were able to reconstruct the ankle and save his foot.

We eventually made it to our designated camping spot, above the city of Kozan. We were taken to a park below a crusaders castle. Again we arrived after dark. There was no firewood so some of the guys cut down a tree. Of course it didn't burn but probably will for the next campers. I found it absurd that along the way we had talked about the environmental impact of an oil pipeline and there we were cutting down trees in a park. I mentioned this fact and was told by some of the guys that, "we were exempt."

Day 11, Destination

We arrived in Ceyhan and then continued on to the Botas pipeline terminal in Yumurtalik (meaning the place where turtles lay their eggs). We were received by a large reception hosted by Botas and included Turkey's Minister of Energy and other officials. It seemed as if the whole country's press also attended.

The Botas facility sits on the edge of the Mediterranean Sea and has a commanding view of the large bay that makes up this portion of the coast. A couple of tankers sit idly on the blue horizon, waiting their turn to be loaded with crude oil. Ceyhan is also the final point on the Iraqi-Turkish pipeline. Turkey has lost billions in transit fees since the US slapped sanctions on Iraq—another reason the Turkish government is

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so anxious to see the Baku pipeline pass through its territory.

Day 12, Going Home

As I packed to return home it was hard not to look back on the last two weeks and see the realities of the region played out in my journey. Maybe I am making too much of the trip, suggesting our experiences are metaphors for the realities of the region, but after a thousand bike break-downs, miles of rugged terrain, dozens of checkpoints, two border crossings, corruption, being attacked, ethnic paranoia, military escorts and wrecks, it is hard not to see the challenges of the proposed pipeline being that different from ours.

The fact is, long-distance pipelines are critical to the world's energy future, but are often located in some of the world's least stable regions. Baku-Ceyhan is no exception. Alternative routes to deliver Caspian crude to the rest of the world have been examined, some even function, but all represent significant risk. Any pipeline from Baku to Ceyhan will suffer from mishaps. The fact that the region is inherently full of hazards

only maximizes this reality.

One final note: after traveling nearly 1000 miles and skirting at least four conflict zones, we came in contact with an ethnic Abkhaz community, the same ethnic group involved in the separatist war in western Georgia since 1992. Abkhaz volunteers from Turkey fought in Georgia. This community has been in Turkey for centuries, part of the fallout of the Caucasus wars of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Still, it seems odd to run into Abkhaz at the end of a route that has been selected primarily for its safety feature, to avoid a northern option that, among other things, would place the pipeline in proximity to war-torn Abkhazia. Even here at the shores of the Mediterranean, it is impossible to distance oneself from the realities of the Caucasus.

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Roman Szporluk

Russia, Ukraine, and the Breakup of the Soviet Union

(Hoover Institution Press, 2000)

Reviewed by Mark L. von Hagen

Today, when ethnic identity and nation-building have assumed a hegemonic place in the programs of AAASS conventions, at the recent World Congress in Tampere, and in specialist organizations such as the Association for the Study of Nationalities, it is difficult for the current generation of social science and humanities scholars to realize that these issues were decidedly at the margins of earlier Sovietological agendas. But that same generation—my generation to a large degree—that today lovingly cites Benedict Anderson, Anthony Smith, Ernest Gellner, and Rogers Brubaker—to name only a few of the late-20th-century social science “revisionists” of national identity—looks back far less often at the work of those who have labored patiently and quietly for several decades within our own Sovietological vineyards.

Roman Szporluk, the Mykhailo Hrushevskyi Professor of History and Director of the Ukrainian Research Institute at Harvard University, is the author of several books devoted to twentieth-century East and Central European intellectual history, including: *The Political Thought of Thomas G. Masaryk* (Boulder, 1981), a study of the “father” of modern Czechoslovakia; *Communism and Nationalism: Karl Marx versus Friedrich List* (Oxford, 1988); and an annotated, translated edition of *Russia in World History* (Ann Arbor, 1970) by Mikhail Pokrovsky, the dean of the “new” Soviet historians of the 1920s who, for his efforts to write a global history based on historical materialism and internationalism, suffered disgrace under Stalin. The volume under review, *Russia, Ukraine, and the Breakup of the Soviet Union*, brings together a selection of Szporluk's essays spanning twenty-five years between 1972 and 1997. Their greatest contribution is to the rethinking of the postwar period of Ukrainian, Russian, and Soviet history, including post-Soviet developments. The essays also illustrate how broadly informed, good old-fashioned Kremlinology can help us better understand Soviet politics and post-Soviet developments through the prism of “the nationality question” in Russian and Soviet history. Because most of the essays were written before the relevant archives were opened in Ukraine and Russia,

Szporluk posed interesting questions to a wide range of available published sources: Soviet ethnographers' studies and demographic statistics, urban geography, education, press, and language policy, ideological pronouncements, even fictional literature. But he was also constantly scouring the latest social science literature on nationalism for additional insights and comparative perspectives, including such partly forgotten classics as the works of Hans Kohn, John Armstrong, Frederick Barghoorn, and Karl Deutsch.

The essays give us a preview of some of the major outlines and themes of Szporluk's forthcoming history of modern Ukraine. The histories of both Ukraine and Russia, or more accurately their historiographies, after a half-century of Cold War divisions and struggles, and with archives opened wide, are ripe for reconceptualization. Perhaps because Szporluk's work has been so focused on ideas, particularly geopolitical and historiographical ones, his own reflections on modern Ukrainian and Russian history are very suggestive of such new avenues of conceptualization.¹ It is on those larger themes and conceptualizations that I want to focus in this essay.²

¹ Particularly in this aspect, Szporluk's essays recall a respected tradition in Ukrainian historical writing in the diaspora of raising important intellectual and historiographical issues for future historians, even when the hope of archival access remained distant. The most influential such collection has been the writings of Ivan Lysiak-Rudnytsky, *Essays in Modern Ukrainian History* (Edmonton, 1987); an important collection on Galician Ukraine edited by Andrei S. Markovits and Frank E. Sysyn, *Nationbuilding and the Politics of Nationalism* (Cambridge, 1982); and on early modern history, edited by Ivo Banac and Frank Sysyn, *Concepts of Nationhood in Early Modern Eastern Europe* (Cambridge, 1986). For a still earlier period Ihor Sevcenko recently brought several of his essays together in a provocative and learned volume, *Ukraine Between East and West* (Edmonton, 1996).

² I have been grappling with many of these themes in my own research and writing: “Does Ukraine Have a History?” *Slavic Review* (fall 1995); “Writing the History of Russia as Empire,” in Ospovat, Evtukhov, Gasparov and von Hagen, eds., *Kazan', Moscow, St. Petersburg: Multiple Faces of the Russian Empire* (Moscow, 1997); with Karen Barkey, eds., *After Empire: Multiethnic Societies and Nation-Building* (Boulder, Colorado, 1997); “Federalism, Regionalisms and Pan-Movements as Re-

Russia, Ukraine, Empire, Nation

Szporluk's overarching concern has been with the state- and nation-building history of Eastern and East Central Europe. The cases he highlights in this collection are Ukraine and Russia, in their various editions in the modern period. He argues that the fates of these two contemporary states have been historically interwoven in ways that are full of ironies and paradoxes. And today, he argues further, their separate state- and nation-building projects continue to influence each other in profound ways.

The central nationality question for Eastern Europe, Szporluk reminds us in a very sobering reversal of the traditional focus on the non-Russians, is the Russian question,³ by which he means the urgent imperative for Russian elites to transform their state's self-identity from an imperial to a national one as a crucial component of Russia's political modernization. What Szporluk describes as the Soviet Union's own version of imperialism has its roots in Stalin's russification policies; the consequence has been a confused and dialectical relationship between Russianness and Soviet communism. He insists that while desovietization and shedding the imperial legacy are two distinct processes, they are also intertwined in complicated ways because the Soviet Union and Soviet identity, such as it existed, became perceived by non-Russians as Russian, even if the ethnic Russian population, or at least some of its leading intellectuals, felt itself denied national self-expression in the Soviet Union. The new national identity (*rossiiskii*, presumably) that Szporluk clearly prefers for Russia is one we would call civic or territorial, not ethnic. In other words, citizens of Russia must come to see themselves primarily not as ethnic Russians (*ruskie*) allied with other Russians outside the borders of today's Russian Federation, but as accepting the sovereignty

of those borders and the multiethnic population that lives within them.⁴

Much of the same is true for post-Soviet Ukraine, which paradoxically inherited a civic-territorial version of a Ukrainian nation from Soviet institutions and practice; however, that achievement is threatened today by extremists both within Ukraine and without (especially in Russia) who seek to ethnicize politics and identity in ways that Szporluk fears would lead to violence. Instead of the ethnic nationalism (or nationalizing states) that most scholars look for (and find), Szporluk devotes several chapters to defining better (and on Ukrainian material) what we understand by civic-territorial identities and loyalties.⁵ How have Ukrainians been able to think about themselves and their state without emphasizing ethnicity and even language? In a particularly ingenious borrowing from the literature of urban and regional geography, Szporluk traces how Kyiv achieved the status of "primate city" in Ukraine; he interprets the 1959 census data as evidence that Kyiv was perceived and accepted by most Ukrainians, east, west or south, as their historically legitimate capital and major city.

The status of the capital in the rank-order of major Ukrainian cities became an important factor in Ukrainian citizens' capacity to imagine a Ukrainian territorial state. (Kyiv only became the capital of Soviet Ukraine in 1934, after it was transferred there from Khar'kiv.)⁶ Here Szporluk demonstrates how important the postwar period of Soviet and Ukrainian history is proving to be in better understanding contemporary politics and identities in the region. His observations are grounded in analyses

imaginings in/of the Russian Empire," unpublished paper; and most extensively in the collaborative research project (with Andreas Kappeler, Frank Sysyn, and Zenon Kohut), "Peoples, Nations, and Identities: The Russian-Ukrainian Encounter" (with funding from the NEH, the Alexander-von-Humboldt Stiftung, and the Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies).

³ Indeed, Szporluk relies on a much richer literature on the non-Russian nations than he is able to for the Russians themselves. Besides an unjustly forgotten study by Frederick Barghoorn, *Soviet Russian Nationalism* (New York, 1956), Szporluk turns to more recent studies of Russian nationalism. See Yitzhak M. Brudny, *Reinventing Russia: Russian Nationalism and the Soviet State, 1953-91* (Cambridge, 1998); John Dunlop, *The Faces of Contemporary Russian Nationalism* (Princeton, 1983); and Alexander Yanov, *The Russian New Right* (Berkeley, 1978).

⁴ Chapters 1 and 16 allow the reader to see the continuity in Szporluk's concerns while also charting a considerable evolution of his thought in response to important changes in post-Soviet politics.

⁵ Szporluk's reflections on civic-territorial identity are especially developed in chapter 5. Here and elsewhere he takes issue with Rogers Brubaker and David Laitin, and the many scholars who have followed in their theoretical and methodological footsteps, on their notion of the "nationalizing state" pursuing an ethnicization of politics, culture and identity.

⁶ Szporluk borrows the concepts via the writings of Chauncey Harris (*Cities of the Soviet Union: Studies in Their Functions, Size, Density, and Growth*, 1970) and David Hooson (*The Soviet Union: People and Regions*, 1966) and applies them to a critical analysis of Soviet demographic and ethnographic statistics.

of changes in ideology and policy, as well as demographic and ethnographic trends.⁷

The Soviet West and Eastern Europe

But, of course, the Ukrainian-Russian relationship does not exist nor has it evolved in a geopolitical and intellectual vacuum. Another major theme of Szporluk's essays is the enduring importance of both Eastern and East Central Europe more generally but also what he calls Far Eastern Europe, or the Soviet West, in particular, for the Ukrainian-Russian relationship and for the fate of Empire, whether Russian or Soviet. This region includes the historic *kresy* of Poland (territory today shared by Lithuania, Belarus, and Ukraine), Latvia, Estonia, Moldova and other contiguous territories contested by Romania, Russia and the Ottoman Empire at various points in the past. Szporluk contends that the western half of the Russian Empire, and later the Soviet Union, proved to be a constant threat to the imperial order by undermining its legitimacy; the populations of this region were more "European" than the Russians themselves and have not ever been successfully integrated into the Moscow-centered state. What Szporluk means by the region's "European" or "Europeanizing" character is that it was a conduit for and translator of modern ideas and institutions, especially national ones, from western Europe into the Russian Empire and Soviet Union. The relations of the Russians with other parts of their empire, especially the Turko-Muslim worlds, were also fraught with tensions and contradictions, but insofar as the imperial and Soviet elites thought of themselves as European or modern (or wanted to be so regarded by others), it was the relationships with and attitudes toward this Soviet/Russian Far West that were more urgent to those elites' self-understanding.⁸

⁷ Szporluk explores how postwar urbanization processes helped reconfigure the status and prestige of Kyiv in chapters 3 and 5. For other explorations of non-ethnic Ukrainian nationalisms, see the work of two anthropologists and a historian: Catherine Wanner, *Burden of Dreams: History and Identity in Post-Soviet Ukraine* (Pennsylvania State University Press, 1998); and Adriana Petryna, "Sarcophagus: Chernobyl in Historical Light," *Cultural Anthropology*, 10 (2): 196-220, 1995; "Technical Error: Measures of Life After Chernobyl," *Social Identities*, 4 (1): 73-92, 1997; Amir Weiner, *Making Sense of War* (Princeton University Press, 2001).

⁸ This thesis is presented most succinctly in chapter 9 of the current collection, but is explored more fully in an earlier volume of essays edited by Professor Szporluk, *The Influence of East Europe and the Soviet West on Soviet Society* (New York,

During the nineteenth century Poland's several rebellions turned out to be "too much for Russia to swallow," but nationalist ideas were attracting large audiences in Finland and among the Baltic peoples as well. After the disintegration of the Russian Empire in the wake of the First World War, the Bolshevik state lost those western territories until the start of World War II. In its moment of greatest triumph in war, the Soviet Union annexed its Far West and then consolidated its empire in postwar Eastern Europe; ironically, that annexation brought with it alien political cultures that could not be entirely Sovietized out of existence. Szporluk's very original contribution here is to focus on the period 1939-47 as a transformative moment, a historical turning point, whose contradictory outcome eventually undermined the Soviet solution to the "national question" that had been hammered out in the interwar years.

Of course, in a set of writings that are so wide-ranging and, in many cases, speculative or provocative, there are bound to be some issues of contention between historians who have had different "groundings" and who therefore look at putatively the same processes and events from somewhat different perspectives. Most of the concerns I raise in Professor Szporluk's work are questions of emphasis and degree of generalizability. One set of questions revolves around the concept of the (Soviet) West and that region's crucial contribution to the destabilization of the Russian Empire and Soviet Union. First, how coherent is the concept of a historical Soviet West to begin with, when the differences and similarities are difficult to balance in the end? Estonia and Latvia differ in important ways from Lithuania even among the Baltic countries; all three played a different role from Poland and Finland (though Estonia has close ties to Finland and Lithuania to Poland). And Belarus seems to be an outlier for most of the important similarities, as suggested by Szporluk's own diminished treatment of Belarus in comparison to the other cases. Ukraine, of course, both fits and doesn't fit the Soviet West, reflecting the historic divisions between western Ukraine and the more Russian (or Russified) eastern and southern Ukraine. These hesitations notwithstanding, the Soviet West is highly suggestive and worth pursuing further, but it needs more sustained exploration to make the case.

Washington, and London, 1976). See also *The Soviet West: Interplay between Nationality and Social Organization*, ed. by Ralph S. Clem (New York, Washington, London, 1975).

Once we agree that there is something that holds together the Soviet West, we need to think about how geopolitically important it was as a region or sub-region. One might argue that in key moments of modern history, whether in the recent dismantling of the Soviet Union or the revolutionary end to the Russian Empire in 1917, the Caucasus has played an equally important role in transforming relations of power in the region. Certainly the Georgians and the Armenians claimed ancient kingdoms and “rediscovered” their national identity in the nineteenth century; Armenia shared Ukraine’s fate in being divided between empires, but also in being an imperial diaspora population. (True, neither the Armenians nor the Georgians had to “share” their ancient kingdoms with the Russians, as Ukrainians have had to contest Russia’s claims to sole ownership of the Kyivan Rus’ period in their own history.) The Armenians, Azeris, and Georgians all had short-lived civil war-era states, similar to the Ukrainian (and to some degree the Belarusan) experiences; and particularly the Georgians and Armenians were able to preserve not only their language and literature, but distinctive alphabets (much as the Baltic republics fought to maintain their languages and Latin alphabets as distinct from the Cyrillicized written languages elsewhere in the USSR). The Nagorno-Karabakh conflict proved fatal for the Soviet elites’ efforts to hold the multinational state together and became the first case of inter-ethnic violence on Soviet territory that could not be effectively contained.

In fairness, Szporluk does not attempt to raise the Soviet West to the prime cause of Soviet collapse, but he suggests that that region posed the most intractable dilemmas for the Moscow leadership. And he does attribute much of the credit for the relatively peaceful dismantling of the Soviet Union to the actions of Russians themselves, particularly those led by Boris Yeltsin (xxxvi). On the other hand, Szporluk’s focus on the Soviet West offers a far more powerful explanation for the political crises that led to the dismantling of the Soviet Union than much of the analysis that expected the end to come from the forces of resurgent Islam in Central Asia.⁹ Still, Szporluk’s intriguing theses await a more comprehensive and synthetic treatment of the role played by the “national ques-

tion” (and individual “national questions”) in the end of the Soviet state and political economy.

Russia, Eastern Europe and Europe

Another important theme is Szporluk’s insistence on returning the history of Eastern Europe and even Russia to a European history that has been distortingly and misleadingly divided by the geopolitical struggle of the Cold War for the past half century at least. The redrawn boundaries of post-1945 Europe were reproduced in a redrawing of intellectuals’ boundaries which excised Russian history from that of Europe after 1917 and Eastern Europe’s history after 1945 (and by retroactive reperiodization in effect excised all East European history) from NATO’s reconfiguration as the telos and limits of Europe. Although communism was one spatial and temporal boundary that served to separate Eastern Europe from the “real” Europe, so too was East European nationalism used to segregate specialists in the region from their counterparts who studied “normal” states and civil societies with healthy patriotism, rather than the versions that are described in often racist terms as tribal or atavistic in the East.¹⁰

In contrast, Szporluk insists on the European normality of much of East European national history. (He insists particularly that Ukraine’s history is not all that different from the rest of Eastern Europe’s.) For one, the nationalisms of Eastern Europe are not qualitatively different from analogous movements in Europe more generally, but share important commonalities in ideas of popular sovereignty, language and culture. True, the three dynastic empires (and USSR) that ruled over today’s nations and successor states posed different challenges to nation-making elites in the East, and the sequence of state- and nation-building was different from that of the classic West European models. But Eastern Europe has shared in many of the fundamental processes of modern European history and deserves broader sympathy and more genuine understanding from those scholars who call themselves Europeanists than has been the case certainly for the past half century.

Though Szporluk appeals for Europeanists to relocate their conceptual boundaries farther to the east, he hesitantly draws the line somewhere west of Russia’s current borders. (He, after all, sees the

⁹ This view was most forcefully propounded by Helene Carrere d’Encausse in her *Decline of the Soviet Empire: The Triumph of the Nations* (New York, 1992). Szporluk himself makes only positive references to d’Encausse’s work.

¹⁰ The most influential proponent of dividing the nationalisms of world history into good, civic ones and bad ethnic ones has been Liah Greenfeld, in *Nationalism: Five Roads to Modernity* (Cambridge, 1992).

Soviet Far West as Europe's Far East.) The relationship of Russia to Europe, however defined, has today once again been raised on the policy and intellectual agenda. Martin Malia, at one end of the divide, asserts that Russia has returned to her European path of development after having been derailed first by World War I and then seventy years of alien, Soviet rule. He seeks to rehabilitate a westernizing, liberal, national alternative to Soviet ideocracy.¹¹ Szporluk's view of Russia, by contrast, stresses greater continuity from the Imperial institutions and ideologies to their Soviet, particularly Stalinist successors. Such a view aligns him more closely with an important antagonist of Malia's, Richard Pipes, who also emphasizes Russia's unfortunate history of failed nation-building in the name of Empire and autocracy.¹² In other words, for Szporluk, European means post-imperial (and Russia, in his opinion, has not attained that status yet), though the history of a couple important European powers, France and Britain, remind us that decolonization and deimperialization were also reluctantly undertaken only in the postwar years, and with often tragic consequences (witness, for example, the French-Algerian war).

The discussions about NATO and European Union expansion have given new life to these disagreements about Russia's place in Europe, and the views of Eastern and East Central Europeans are helping to shape those discussions. Szporluk's and Pipes' interwar Polish origins have influenced their own wrestling with the question of how "European" Russia can become, and their views are closer to the European (and I suspect American) mainstream than those of Malia. Still Szporluk reminds us, in the final analysis, that Ukraine's contemporary state- and nation-building projects, and possibly Ukraine's basic survival, hinge on the successful transformation of Russia to a democratic, civic, territorial nation. Many friends of independent Ukraine often appear to be wishing for the worst in Russia because they rue the historic domination of Ukraine by Russia. But a Russia excluded from Europe—from European institutions, norms, and values—would be a threat to Ukraine's own integration into Europe. After all, a starkly contrasting

model of post-Soviet state relations is that of Belarus and Russia in their solemnly proclaimed union. Belarus's leadership appears to be willing to cede considerable sovereignty to the union and to restrict the processes of democratization inside Belarus', and such concessions encourage neo-imperialist thinking inside Russia (and among certain circles in Ukraine) as well.

And just as many Russians today blame "Soviet legacies" for their contemporary difficulties rather than facing up to their own mistaken policies, so, too, many Ukrainian political leaders blame "the Russian factor" for most of Ukraine's contemporary woes rather than admit their own lack of imagination and political will. This does not mean we should turn a blind eye to Russian policies or trends that run counter to European or Euro-Atlantic interests and values, nor is it a denial of the considerable institutional and social-psychological legacies of the Soviet system and Russian domination in that system, but too often this type of laying blame becomes ideology rather than objective analysis of the situation. However the issues of legacies are to be resolved, Ukrainian-Russian relations are likely to be very important for the foreseeable future. Those who hope for the survival and growth of an independent Ukraine should also hope for a truly democratic Russian neighbor. The survival of an independent Ukraine in itself will be an important indicator of Russia's successful deimperialization, or, in Szporluk's understanding, its Europeanization.

Alternative Geopolitical Imaginaries and Periodizations

The theme of Russia's reformability is tied to Szporluk's search in the region's history for alternate political and geopolitical arrangements that would have permitted greater accommodation of national cultures, identities, institutions, and elites in the contexts of the Soviet bloc. Sadly, it is a search that leads to the gradual erosion of his hope in the Soviet elites' capacity and willingness to redress the inequities of Soviet nationality policies and policy toward Eastern Europe. Early on, the Bolsheviks' own nationality policies during the 1920s, the period of *korenizatsiia*, offered some hope for a more equitable balancing of powers between the dominant Russians and subordinate non-Russians. And Szporluk insists that Lenin himself had a good appreciation of the Ukrainian question, even if Lenin's views remained a distinct minority opinion

¹¹ See his *Russia under Western Eyes* (Cambridge, Mass., and London, 1999); and *The Soviet Tragedy* (New York, 1994).

¹² For Pipes' important statements on these issues, see his *Russia under the Old Regime* (New York, 1974); and *The Formation of the Soviet Union: Communism and Nationalism, 1917-1923* (Cambridge, Mass., 1964). Geoffrey Hosking has also recently reformulated this thesis in *Russia: People and Empire* (Cambridge, Mass., 1997).

in the Bolshevik leadership.¹³ Elsewhere in the region both Tomas Masaryk's alternate vision of the political arrangement of post-1918 East and East Central Europe (p. 263) and the Prague reforms of 1968 (p. 14), one element of which was to restore equality in the relations between Czechs and Slovaks in Czechoslovakia, held out hope, in turn, for Soviet reforms of inter-state East European and intra-Soviet national relations. Szporluk also explores the Yugoslav solution of extraterritorial cultural identity as a possible option for the Soviet Union (p. 59).¹⁴

From a perspective that is sensitive to alternative paths of development, Szporluk argues for a periodization of the Russian-Ukrainian relationship that is marked by the following important years: 1922, the first "resolution" of the Soviet national question in the structure of the USSR, a structure which under Stalin would be proclaimed as a universal model for all states, most importantly those in East Central and Southeastern Europe after World War II; 1939-45, a violent extension of that Soviet model of nation-building to a region that had had considerable alternative experience, first Far Eastern Europe, later Eastern Europe after the wartime victory; 1956-68, from the realignment of power after Stalin's death that permitted a doctrinal reassessment of Soviet experience and the brief tolerance of multiple national roads to socialism until the repudiation of East European experience and the reassertion of the Soviet model as universal after the Prague Spring; 1988/91, the dismantling of the East European bloc and then the Soviet Union itself.

I might reformulate the first important turning point in the Russian-Ukrainian encounter by adding World War I, the revolutionary and civil war years, 1914-1923. The war militarized and internationalized the Russian, Ottoman and Austro-Hungarian

Empires' nationalities politics, including the expectations of "all-Russian" and Ukrainian political and intellectual elites. The revolution of 1917 marked the first steps in Ukrainian state-and nation-building in conditions of relative democracy, and the civil war years confronted the White armies and the Bolshevik leadership with their first experience of Ukrainian states, even if semi-sovereign and even if short-lived. (And, after all, how sovereign were either the White Governments or even the Bolsheviks during the civil war years?) As with other periods of transformation in the Russian-Ukrainian relationship, so too this set of realignments did not happen in isolation from broader processes of change in class, national identity and other political loyalties. In large measure, the 1922 Constitution of the USSR is a legacy of that period's wrenching transformations. Geoff Eley has made a persuasive case for such a periodization (1914-1923), and this chronological remapping also offers the possibility of bringing historians of Eastern and Western Europe together in new ways, in other words of integrating East European history into the narrative of an expanded Europe's past.¹⁵

Szporluk's essays touch on many other issues, but the grand questions of relations between Russia and Ukraine, the futures of Europe and Empire, are key for rethinking the meaning of the twentieth century and remain firmly on the geopolitical agendas of today's policymakers in the region and beyond. His ambivalence about Russia's relationship to Europe reflects the very real doubts and misgivings in both European countries and Russian elites about Europe's new borders. His suggestions for rethinking the periodization of the twentieth century in Eastern Europe promise greater dialogue with historians of western Europe.

To Wayne Vucinich, one of Szporluk's Stanford University teachers and a veteran nationalities specialist himself, we owe thanks for arranging with Hoover Press to publish these essays, but above all, Roman Szporluk has earned our gratitude for challenging conventional wisdom and imaginary geopolitical boundaries.

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¹³ Mikhail Pokrovskii, the subject of Szporluk's earlier scholarship, set the goal of Soviet history-writing to overcome the Russian chauvinist and imperialist legacies of pre-revolutionary Russia. But also the dissident critique of Soviet nationality policy articulated by Ivan Dziuba in *Internationalism or Russification?* (New York, 1974) influenced Szporluk's thinking; Dziuba argued that Stalinist nationality policies violated the more enlightened programs of the Leninist 1920s. On Lenin's views being those of the minority, see a recent study by Jeremy Smith, *The Bolsheviks and the National Question, 1917-1923* (New York, 1999); on the politics and practice of *korenizatsiia* in Ukraine, see George Liber, *Soviet Nationality Policy, Urban Growth, and Identity Change in the Ukrainian SSR, 1923-1934* (Cambridge, 1992).

¹⁴ See chapter 2 in the volume under review for a discussion of reformist alternatives to Soviet policies.

¹⁵ See Geoff Eley, "Remapping the Nation: War, Revolutionary Upheaval and State Formation in Eastern Europe, 1914-1923," in P. J. Potichnyi and H. Aster, eds., *Ukrainian-Jewish Relations in Historical Perspective* (Edmonton, 1988), pp. 205-46. For more on my attempt at rethinking the place of the Ukrainian revolution in the events of 1914-1923, see my essay "Ukraine," in Acton, Cherniaev, and Rosenberg, eds., *Critical Companion to the Russian Revolution, 1914-1921* (London, 1997), pp. 728-40.

BALKAN HISTORY, MADELEINE'S WAR, AND NATO'S KOSOVO

Gordon N. Bardos

MISHA GLENNY

The Balkans 1804-1999: Nationalism, War and the Great Powers
London: Granta Books, 1999

TIM JUDAH

Kosovo: War and Revenge
New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000

MIRANDA VICKERS

Between Serb and Albanian: A History of Kosovo
New York: Columbia University Press, 1998

Early in 1999, a small, poor, and backward corner of Europe became the center of world attention. On March 24, the self-proclaimed greatest military alliance in history began a 78-day bombing campaign against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY), allegedly to force it to accept the terms of an international settlement for regulating the FRY's relations with its rebellious province of Kosovo. NATO's "Operation Allied Force" soon went awry, however, as myriad miscalculations on the part of all the relevant players to this drama quickly threatened to spiral out of control. Then-Russian president Boris Yeltsin openly warned that NATO's actions could lead to world war, the bombing of the Chinese Embassy in Belgrade heightened Great Power tensions even further, and the unity of the Atlantic Alliance itself was severely tested. In the aftermath of the conflict, Kosovo has joined Bosnia in becoming another Balkan protectorate of the international community; Macedonia may yet become a member of this collection, and even Albania's future is uncertain.

How did a small-scale guerrilla war manage to become the focal point of a global crisis? The three

books under review here, though very different in their scope, all shed light on the problems confronting international policies in the region, and the misperceptions about the Balkans underlying these policies. Glenny's book is the most ambitious, offering a grand sweep of nationalist movements throughout the Balkans over the past 200 years. Vickers provides a well-focused history of Albanian-Serb rivalry over Kosovo, with the bulk of her book concentrating on twentieth century events. Judah concentrates on the immediate background to the Kosovo conflict of the 1990s and the war itself (and at the same time offers a commendable example of what a journalist's first draft of history should look like). All three books, however, suggest that much of what the "international community" has been attempting to do in the Balkans has been based on a significant misunderstanding of the underlying forces driving the violence.

I. Balkan History

The bulk of recent writings on the breakup of the former Yugoslavia have focused blame for the state's disintegration on malevolent politicians and leaders who deliberately stirred up popular prejudices to keep themselves in power. Richard Holbrooke, for instance, claims that "Yugoslavia's tragedy was not foreordained. It was the product of bad, even criminal, political leaders who encouraged ethnic confrontation for personal, political, and financial gain."¹ Along similar lines, Warren Zimmerman has noted that "Yugoslavia's death and the violence that followed resulted from the conscious actions of nationalist leaders who coopted, intimidated, circumvented, or eliminated all opposition to their demagogic designs. Yugoslavia was destroyed from the top down."²

A succinct summary of much of the thinking in this school of thought can be found in a recent report on the November 2000 elections in Bosnia-Herzegovina produced by the International Crisis Group:

Despite five years and five billion US dollars of international community investment in Bosnia, the 11 November Bosnian elections demonstrated once again that international engagement has failed to provide a sustainable basis for a functioning state, capable of surviving an international withdrawal. The elections highlighted once again the near complete failure—in the face of determined nationalist extremism—of an international approach that places emphasis on hopes that moderate, co-operative Bosnian partners will come to power through elections. The elections also revealed the complete unsuitability of the present Dayton constitutional structures, as well as the international community implementing structures and policies... Many in the international community had naively hoped that democratic change in Zagreb and Belgrade would translate into change

among Bosnia's Croats and Serbs. To the contrary, these democratic victories appear to have energized Bosnia's ethnic extremists.³

A careful reading of the above suggests that these "ethnic extremists" must have almost superhuman abilities. Neither the passage of time nor the expenditure of billions of dollars can defeat their agenda. They are able to defy the will of the international community, and have found ways of sabotaging or subverting constitutional arrangements designed by the brightest (?) minds at the U.S. State Department.⁴ They are impervious to positive democratic changes in Bosnia's immediate regional environment. They are even able to waylay the will of the people, as expressed in elections organized, supervised, and paid for by the international community.

Such views, however, do not take us very far in understanding what is happening in the Balkans. The belief that entire societies can be manipulated in this way, as Rogers Brubaker points out, reduces the general population to being "passive dupes, vehicles or objects of manipulative designs" instead of "active participants" and "political subjects in their own right."⁵ Nor can such views explain why

³ *Bosnia's November Elections: Dayton Stumbles* (Sarajevo/Brussels: International Crisis Group Report No. 104), 18 December 2000, Executive Summary.

⁴ On this note, it is worth pointing out that many people involved in Balkan policy over the past decade have decried the appalling lack of understanding about the Balkans exhibited by international personnel dealing with the region. As Jacques Klein, the head of the United Nations Mission in Bosnia recently noted, "There are more people (in Sarajevo) who know nothing about this place than in any other capital where I've ever served." See Klein's comments as quoted by Robert Wright, Irena Guzelova, and Jonathan Birchall, "Bosnia-Herzegovina: Fear proves to be the biggest vote-winner," *The Financial Times* (London), 18 December 2000, Bosnia-Herzegovina Country Survey. Along the same lines, the above-quoted report by the ICG (p. 17) claims that the international effort in Bosnia has been "hampered by a rapid turnover of often unqualified personnel, lacking relevant experience, including sometimes in senior positions." To this, one should add that many of today's so-called "Balkan experts" often exhibit a woeful ignorance of, or even interest in, anything that happened in the former Yugoslavia prior to 1987.

⁵ Rogers Brubaker, *Nationalism Reframed: Nationhood and the National Question in the New Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 72. Brubaker's comments were

¹ Holbrooke, *To End a War* (New York: Random House, 1998), pp. 23-24.

² Warren Zimmerman, *Origins of a Catastrophe* (New York: Times Books, 1993), p. vii. This mode of thinking leads to some rather perverse logic; for instance, the belief that in bombing a country for 78 days you are waging war against an individual, not against a country or a people. NATO Secretary-General Lord George Robertson, for instance, recently claimed "The 19 democratic nations of the Alliance did not commit an act of aggression against the Yugoslavian (sic) people. We did not have anything against them. We acted against Milosevic." See Yuri Pankov's interview with Robertson, "Dialogue, Not Confrontation," in *Krasnaya Zvezda* (Moscow), 20 February 2001.

nationalist parties in places such as Bosnia are able to win election after election for more than a decade,⁶ even though the leaders of these parties come and go.

Alija Izetbegovic once described the mass appeal of national issues by saying, "If you call for an open forum on democracy, a hundred intellectuals show up. If the forum is about nationalism, you will get 10 thousand people from all walks of life on the streets."⁷ In a more scholarly vein, Ivo J. Lederer observed in his classic 1969 essay, "Nationalism and the Yugoslavs,"

The eastern European "way of life" is akin to a stream made up of a variety of tributaries of which nationalism is only one, but nationalism has run so deep and strong that it has appeared to possess an elemental, almost gravitational, quality. ...nationalism has been the fundamental fact of life for nearly two hundred years. Nowhere has this been so clear and agonizingly the case as in the lands of the Yugoslavs.⁸

But while astute politicians and scholars have recognized the historical force and social depth of this phenomenon, far too many others have failed

to grasp its significance.⁹ This misdiagnosis of the problems facing southeastern Europe, however, often leads to seriously flawed policies. The three books under review here provide a useful corrective by showing that the problems of the former Yugoslavia long predate the emergence of Slobodan Milosevic or Franjo Tudjman.

Two points bear stressing here. First, nationalist conflict in the Balkans is not *merely* the result of evil leaders stirring up ethnic hatred for the sake of their own personal political gain. Although we can always count on politicians to embrace policies that will further their ambitions, as A.J.P. Taylor once noted, "Statesmen exploit popular emotion; they do not create it."¹⁰ Instead, nationalist leaders gain popular support when ethnic groups believe they face an existential threat to their survival, a threat best confronted by the creation of strong, viable nation-states enjoying significant levels of popular support and legitimacy.

What determines the timing of these outbreaks of interethnic conflict in the Balkans is usually a function of events in the wider geo-strategic order. More specifically, when the international order imposing a modicum of security in the region breaks down, individuals resort to seeking security in their collective national/ethnic identity.¹¹ Thus,

made in reference to the Krajina Serbs in the period 1990-91. If the average citizen in Southeastern Europe is indeed a "passive dupe," perhaps we should reconsider the extent to which it is worth the effort to foster Jeffersonian-style democracy in the region.

⁶ In fact, in every election held in Bosnia-Herzegovina in the twentieth century, the inhabitants have voted along ethnic lines, essentially making elections ethnic censuses. See Xavier Bougarel, "Bosnia-Herzegovina: State and Communitarianism," in D.A. Dyker and I. Vejvoda, eds., *Yugoslavia and After: A Study in Fragmentation, Despair and Rebirth* (New York: Addison Wesley Longman, 1996), pp. 87-115. With regard to the post-Dayton period, of course, one could question the degree to which elections have any real meaning, insofar as representatives of the international community have been given the power to dismiss publicly elected officials from office—a power used with increasing frequency in recent years.

⁷ Cited by Carsten Wieland, "Izetbegovic und Jinnah-die selektive Vereinnahmung zweier 'Muslim-Führer'." *Südosteuropa Mitteilungen* (1999/Nr. 4), p. 351.

⁸ Ivo J. Lederer, "Nationalism and the Yugoslavs," in *Nationalism in Eastern Europe*, Peter F. Sugar and Ivo J. Lederer, eds. (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1969), p. 396.

⁹ On the reasons why many westerners fail to appreciate the popular strength of nationalism, see, for instance, Joseph Rothschild, *Ethnopolitics: A Conceptual Framework* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1981), Chapter 1. See also Walker Connor, "Ethnonationalism," in *Understanding Political Development*, Myron Weiner and Samuel P. Huntington, eds. (Boston: Little, Brown & Company, 1987), pp. 196-220. Indeed, medievalists have begun to attack the entire contemporary academic paradigm of nationalism as a "modern" phenomenon by showing that the "invention" of nations and nationalism itself long predate the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. On this note, see Adrian Hastings, *The Construction of Nationhood: Ethnicity, Religion and Nationalism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

¹⁰ A.J.P. Taylor, *The Struggle for Mastery in Europe: 1848-1918* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1954), p. 233.

¹¹ For useful interpretations of ethnic conflict in the Balkans from this perspective, see Barry R. Posen, "The Security Dilemma and Ethnic Conflict," and Jack Snyder, "Nationalism and the Crisis of the Post-Soviet State," both in Michael E. Brown, ed., *Ethnic Conflict and International Security* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993), pp. 103-124, and 79-101, respectively. For a detailed examination of how the security dilemma affects Bosnia-

the Ottoman Empire's decline in the nineteenth century provided the space for Balkan nations to rebel against their imperial overlords, most notably in the Serbian rebellion of 1804 and the Greek Insurrection of the 1820s, both of which Glenny covers in a lively fashion. The process proceeded throughout the nineteenth century, with, for example, the Herzegovinian peasants' rebellion in the late 1860s. In light of more recent Bosnian history, it is worth recalling a passage from the "Unification Proclamation" issued by the leaders of the Serb revolt in 1876:

After so much waiting and without hope for any type of help, we resolve that from today we forever break with the non-Christian rule of Constantinople, and desiring to share our fate with our Serb brothers . . . proclaim that we are uniting our homeland Bosnia to the Principality of Serbia.¹²

But the Serbs were not the only ethnic group striving to carve their own nation-state from the "sick man of Europe." As Vickers points out (pp. 42-45), in June 1878, Albanians from various parts of the Balkans gathered to form the Prizren League, an organization devoted to developing an Albanian national program to counter that of the various Greek, Serb, and Bulgarian programs then emerging as the Ottoman empire decayed. The delegates to the meeting proceeded to claim areas of present-day Macedonia, Kosovo, and Montenegro for the Albanians. Many other ethnic groups in the Balkans had their own versions of a "greater" national program as well.

This desire on the part of the peoples of southeastern Europe to create viable nation-states differed little from similar national programs in other parts of Europe. As Gale Stokes has described this process,

Remapping state boundaries onto ethnic lines is one of the major threads of post-French Revolutionary European history. The process began with the unifications of Italy and Germany,

Herzegovina, see Susan L. Woodward, "Bosnia and Herzegovina: How Not to End Civil War," in Barbara F. Walter and Jack Snyder, eds., *Civil Wars, Insecurity and Intervention* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999), pp. 73-115.

¹² "The Unification Proclamation" of 1876, as quoted by Nebojsa Radmanovic in *Krajinski Vojnik* (Banja Luka), 28 June 1997, p. 34.

ran through the creation of new states at the end of World War I, and had its most catastrophic outcomes at the end of World War II with the Holocaust and the expulsion of the Germans from Eastern Europe . . . the wars of Yugoslav succession are not some aberrant Balkan phenomenon; they are the last stages of a process of European redefinition that has been going on since the French revolution.¹³

Indeed, as Istvan Deak adds, "the creation of nation-states has been so much a part of modern European history as to allow us to call it inevitable."¹⁴

Here it bears stressing that war and its attendant violence has been part and parcel of the European state-building process; in Charles Tilly's classic formulation, "War made the state, and the state made war."¹⁵ Viewed in this context, however, many of the explanations offered for the violence attending the disintegration of the former Yugoslav state, whether "ancient ethnic hatreds" or "elite manipulation," assume only secondary importance. Instead, it is infinitely more fruitful to understand the logic underlying military strategies during the "Wars of the Yugoslav Succession" as being driven by the imperatives of creating viable states. In the former Yugoslavia, as Susan Woodward notes, the various ethnic factions were each struggling to win "the geopolitical and institutional preconditions of sovereignty: obtaining the strategic and economic assets and borders of a secure future state, destroying those of one's enemies, and building (in the course of war) the armies and foreign alliances of a new defense."¹⁶

A second point bears mentioning here as well. Given the general state of illiteracy prevailing in the Balkans in the nineteenth century, and the absence of anything resembling twentieth century mass media, a review of Balkan history over the past 200

¹³ Gale Stokes, "The Unpalatable Paradox," *Nationalities Papers* 27 (June 1999), pp. 327-329.

¹⁴ Istvan Deak, "A Somewhat Pessimistic View of Charles Ingrao's 'Understanding Ethnic Conflict in Central Europe'," *Nationalities Papers* 27 (June 1999), p. 320.

¹⁵ Tilly, "Reflections on the History of European State-Making," in Charles Tilly, ed., *The Formation of National States in Western Europe* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1975), p. 42.

¹⁶ Susan Woodward, *Balkan Tragedy: Chaos and Dissolution After the Cold War* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 1995), p. 272.

years should make us rethink the emphasis recently placed on the role of the mass media in the breakup of the former Yugoslavia. This is not to say that the means of communication in a peasant society at the time were benign; Glenný, for instance, cites one Albanian epic poem:

As always, Albanian and Slav
Were at blood since a tragic fate
Placed fire and gunpowder side by side.
Placed side by side Albania and Montenegro!¹⁷

But while historical and cultural legacies may have emphasized conflict between ethnic groups rather than coexistence, it is a far cry to claim that such conflict was conjured out of nothing by evil leaders. That is, unless we want to believe that just as radio and television supposedly whipped Albanians, Bosniacs, Croats, and Serbs into fratricidal frenzies in the 1990s, *gusla's*, *frula's*, *tambura's* and epic poems did the same in the nineteenth century. Indeed, if, over the course of 45 years, a communist regime (with all of the propaganda instruments such a system had at its disposal) was unable to inculcate a sense of "brotherhood and unity" amongst the peoples of the former Yugoslavia, it is hard to believe that Izetbegovic, Milosevic or Tudjman could drive them into a fratricidal frenzy in a matter of two or three.

Instead of blaming evil leaders and malevolent media for the violence of the 1990s, a more powerful explanatory model should seek to understand Balkan nationalist struggles over the past two centuries, as Stokes suggests, as simply a later manifestation of a common European state- and nation-building process. What interrupted this "inevitable" flow of modern European history in the Balkans was the tendency of the Great Powers to use the Balkans as the playground for their competitive games, the main thesis of the Glenný book.

One of the most important efforts by the Great Powers to protect their interests in the Balkans was the Congress of Berlin in 1878, and Glenný provides a vivid account of the disdain with which

representatives of the Great Powers treated the delegations of various Balkan ethnic groups. Forty years after the Congress of Berlin, in the midst of the Great War (the spark of which had of course been lit in the Balkans), Nicholas Murray Butler would write,

Everyone can now see that the Treaty of Berlin was one of the most colossal blunders in modern political history. It so shuffled the cards of diplomacy as to mislead the people concerning the game which was being played, and instead of settling the grave questions with which it dealt, that Treaty simply glossed them over and opened the way for a new military struggle . . .¹⁸

Subsequent attempts by the Great Powers to address the shortcomings of the Congress of Berlin fared little better in achieving a stable solution for southeastern Europe. In 1918, as Michael Ignatieff points out, Woodrow Wilson

...enunciated the right of self-determination for the peoples of the Ottoman and Austro-Hungarian empires, and the draftsmen at Versailles then laid out the borders that the Balkan states have been fighting over, off and on, ever since... Eighty years later, America continues to try to remedy the errors of Versailles.¹⁹

One is tempted to believe that more recent efforts by the Great Powers to create "order" in the Balkans will be seen by subsequent generations in the same light. Tellingly, both Glenný and Judah write that the turning point in the Albanian struggle for Kosovo was what happened in Bosnia; more specifically, the agreement negotiated to end the conflict there, the Dayton Peace Accords (hereafter, the DPA). For regardless of the spin international officials use to describe the DPA (i.e., that it created the basis for a "united state with two multiethnic entities"), the fundamental reality of Dayton was that it ratified the creation of mono-ethnic entities created by force and the violent expulsion of ethnic minorities. In this, it was similar to the U.S.' support for the expulsion of the Krajina

¹⁷ *Gjaku i marrun* (Blood avenged), cited by Glenný on p. 151.

¹⁸ See Nicholas Murray Butler's introduction to Vladislav R. Savic, *Southeastern Europe: The Main Problem of the Present World Struggle* (New York: Fleming R. Revell Company, 1918). Butler, incidentally, was at the time the President of Columbia University.

¹⁹ Michael Ignatieff, "The Dream of Albanians," in *The New Yorker*, 11 January 1999, p. 36.

Serbs in August 1995, for among Western countries there was "the unspoken but ever-present feeling that if there were no more Serbs in Croatia, then, in future, there would be no more problem either" (Judah, p. 121).²⁰ The lesson for extremists (on both sides) in Kosovo was thus obvious: violence and ethnic cleansing would be tolerated and endorsed. One need only pick the right international patrons.

Timothy Garton Ash once noted that "what we are proposing to do in our Balkan quasi protectorates is not just to freeze war. It is also to freeze history."²¹ What have been the results of this effort to "freeze" history? Take, for instance, the case of Bosnia. Over the past eight years, the international community has spent an astronomical \$50-90 billion trying to bring peace to the country, to rebuild its infrastructure, reform its political and economic systems, and produce a non-national, pan-ethnic democratic consciousness on the part of its population.²² Over 20,000 international troops and 15,000 international civilian personnel are currently in Bosnia organizing elections, postponing elections, reversing electoral results, imposing laws, rewriting primary school textbooks, creating television networks, monitoring customs services, police forces, and military units, regulating the airwaves, reforming the judiciary, setting up a stock market... the list is literally endless. And for all of this effort, the locals still have an unlimited number of ways of obstructing and/or derailing the best-intentioned of efforts. A report issued by the U.S.

Congress' General Accounting Office in 2000 noted that "there has been no measurable progress in reducing crime and corruption in the four years since the end of the war."²³ In part due to such corruption, if one factors out the donor aid Bosnia has received, the country would have experienced *negative* economic growth in the postwar period.²⁴ Not surprisingly, Bosnia-Herzegovina's young people are voting with their feet to escape this situation; a recent study by a U.N. agency found that 62 percent of the country's young people would leave Bosnia if they had a way out.²⁵ As one international official captured the problems experienced in trying to impose the international agenda on Bosnia,

We've played all the cards: the money, the advice, the pressure. We have done everything my country has learned to do in two hundred years of meddling in other countries. I still wonder if it is enough to achieve what we want.²⁶

²⁰ Not all international officials shared this opinion. As Glenny (p. 650) cites a statement by Carl Bildt at the time, "If we accept that it is alright for Tudjman to cleanse Croatia of its Serbs, then how on earth can we object if one day Milosevic sends his army to clean out the Albanians from Kosovo?"

²¹ See Ash, "Cry, the Dismembered Country," *The New York Review of Books*, 14 January 1999, p. 32.

²² For the estimate on how much the international community has spent in Bosnia-Herzegovina in the 1990s, see Jasna Hasovic, "Pola budzeta za plate sluzbenika," *Dani* (Sarajevo), 8 September 2000. Determining a precise amount is impossible because different agencies use different methodologies for calculating their expenses. Contrast these figures with B-H's annual GDP, estimated at \$6.2 billion in 1999. Hasovic and others estimate that over half of this amount has been spent on the salaries of foreign "experts" themselves.

²³ Christopher Marquis with Carlotta Gall, "Congressional Report Says Corruption is Stifling Bosnia," *The New York Times*, 7 July 2000, p. A3.

²⁴ *Why Will No One Invest in Bosnia and Herzegovina?: An Overview of Impediments to Investment and Self Sustaining Economic Growth in the Post Dayton Era*. Sarajevo: International Crisis Group, 21 April 1999, p. 8.

²⁵ The public opinion survey by the U.N. Development Program was cited by High Representative Wolfgang Petritsch in a speech before the European Parliament's Foreign Affairs Committee in Brussels on 22 January 2001.

²⁶ *The New York Times*, 13 September 1998. In a similar vein, after a particularly difficult period of trying to force Bosniacs, Croats, and Serbs into agreeing to a common currency, license plates, and passports, former Deputy High Representative Jacques Klein claimed, "'Never in the history of diplomacy was so much time and effort expended by so many diplomats over such trivia.'" See the speech by Klein before the Royal Institute of International Affairs, London, 21 April 1999, available at <http://www.ohr.int/speeches/s990421a.htm>. It is an interesting exercise to contrast this exasperation with the thoughts of one of the protagonists in the Andric novel *Bosnian Chronicle*, Hamdi Bey Teskeredzic, who, when the people of Travnik learned that a French consul was being sent to their town, exclaimed, "We're on our own ground here, and anyone else who comes is a stranger and won't be able to hold out long. Many people have come here intending to stay, but so far we've seen the back of all of them." See Ivo Andric, *Bosnian Chronicle* (London: Harvill Press, 1992), p. 3.

The above analysis is not meant to deny the essentially noble purposes of much of what the international community is attempting to accomplish in the Balkans. But a mistaken understanding of the forces driving the disintegration of the former Yugoslavia has led to mistaken remedies. The root of the "problem" in the Balkans has not been "evil leaders." Rather, it has been the efforts of the various ethnic groups in the former Yugoslavia to create states reflecting their national identities and aspirations, states which provide them with a measure of collective security, and states which allow them to participate as recognized partners in the international community. Unfortunately, many of the short-term policies adopted to deal with "evil leaders" in the Balkans, uninformed by a comparative perspective of similar phenomena during other historical periods or in other parts of the world, have been counterproductive, if we believe that the real goal of international engagement should be to foster the economic and social stability needed to sustain democratic polities. They have also led to policy disasters such as NATO's war in Kosovo.

II. Madeleine's War

Soon after Dayton, extremists in Kosovo created an obscure organization named the "Kosovo Liberation Army." The KLA's initial actions involved murdering mailmen, forest rangers, Serb refugees, and the occasional ambush of a police patrol (Judah provides the most detailed account in English of the KLA's origins published to date). By February 1998, the U.S. State Department's top Balkan envoy, Robert Gelbard, would claim that "the KLA is, without doubt, a terrorist organization."

Throughout 1998, the conflict between the KLA and Yugoslav government forces constituted a fairly typical guerrilla war and counter-insurgency campaign, with all of the excesses common to such warfare²⁷; as Deak notes, "history has still to show

a police or military force that did not grow ruthless when attacked by fighters dressed as civilians."²⁸ Prior to March 1999, the fighting in Kosovo had been confined to areas in which the KLA had been active; Kosovo's major urban areas, such as Pristina, Djakovica, and Kosovska Mitrovica, and large parts of eastern and southern Kosovo, saw little or no violence. Even vociferous supporters of the NATO intervention now admit "there was no humanitarian crisis in Kosovo in 1997, or in 1998, or in most of 1999, in any conventionally understood sense of the term."²⁹

Yet, as Timothy Garton Ash notes of the KLA, this "bunch of farmyard Albanian ex-Marxist-Leninist terrorists"³⁰ very quickly managed to draw NATO into the first war in its 50-year history. How

The commander of the Kosovo Protection Force, Agim Ceku, is already believed to be the subject of a sealed indictment for war crimes because of his activities during the war in Croatia from 1993-95. The political leader of the KLA, Hashim Thaci, has been directly linked to a massacre of 22 Serb civilians in the village of Klecka in the summer of 1998, and with the assassination of political rivals within Kosovo. See Chris Hedges, "Kosovo's Rebels Accused of Executions in the Ranks," *The New York Times*, 25 June 1999, p. 1. See also Tom Walker, "KLA Chief Accused of War Crimes," *The Sunday Times* (London), 10 October 1999. Recent assassinations of Thaci's political opponents in the wake of Kosovo's October 2000 municipal elections suggest his understanding of a democratic transfer of power is rather different than Western notions of the term.

²⁸ See Istvan Deak, "Out of the Past," *The New Republic*, 8 June 1998. Indeed, as this is being written and we watch the growing death toll in the violence between Israeli forces and Palestinian demonstrators, we are reminded yet again that the struggle between different peoples over land is almost always a brutal and bloody affair. Consider, for instance, the price of the first six weeks of fighting between Israelis and Palestinians in the most recent unrest: according to a U.N. report, Israeli forces have destroyed 431 private homes, 13 public buildings, 10 factories, and 14 religious buildings. The human costs of the fighting left over 200 people dead in the first six weeks, the vast majority of whom were Palestinian civilians. Other tactics adopted by Israeli security forces have included extra-judicial assassinations of suspected "troublemakers," and prohibitions on travel for communities of tens of thousands of people. See William A. Orme Jr., "Palestinian Economy in Ruins, U.N. Says," *The New York Times*, 6 December 2000, p. A12.

²⁹ David Rieff, "Kosovo's Humanitarian Circus," *World Policy Journal* 17 (Fall 2000), p. 27.

³⁰ See Timothy Garton Ash, "Kosovo: Was it Worth It?" in *The New York Review of Books*, 21 September 2000, p. 53.

²⁷ On this note, it is worth pointing out that several KLA leaders are now under investigation by the Hague Tribunal for war crimes committed by KLA forces in 1998--long before the NATO intervention. See Tom Walker, "KLA Faces Trials for War Crimes on Serbs: Inquiry Turns on Albanians," *The Sunday Times* (London), 3 September 2000.

it managed to do so will remain a matter of controversy for a long time to come; certainly, it has much to do with Western misconceptions of what has been driving events in the former Yugoslavia (i.e., "evil leaders" instead of historical processes). Similarly, it also has much to do with the very palpable need among Western leaders, and especially those in the U.S., to find a new *raison d'être* for NATO's continued existence.

Glenny and Judah also cite evidence claiming that all sides simply stumbled into the war. Milosevic believed that NATO was bluffing, and that even if NATO attacked, European public opinion would never tolerate a long-term campaign. Milosevic may also have calculated that standing up to a NATO attack could strengthen his position at home.

But Milosevic was not the only one to miscalculate. NATO did not have any contingency plans worked out for a longer conflict, and the original list of bombing targets was exhausted within a matter of days. In a very cogent analysis of American miscues along the way to the Kosovo war, Christopher Layne and Benjamin Schwarz point out that on March 24, the first day of the bombing campaign, U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, the single person most associated with the war, declared "I don't see this as a long-term operation." Just eleven days later, however, Albright would say, "We never expected this to be over quickly."³¹

In light of more recent evidence that has emerged since these books were written, however, it is worth considering to what extent the decision to go to war against the FRY really was a miscalculation. Considerable circumstantial evidence points to the conclusion that hawks within the Clinton Administration, led by Albright, were eager for a showdown with Milosevic and were determined to create a scenario in which a military confrontation would be all but inevitable. A significant turnaround in U.S. policy was clear by

November 1998 when the State Department began to claim that Milosevic was the problem in the region, not the solution. By this time, the CIA had already spent a considerable amount of time providing KLA operatives with American military training manuals, field advice, satellite telephones, GPS systems, and even General Wesley Clark's mobile phone number.³² And when a controversial effort to find a political solution to the crisis was made in February and March 1999 during the Rambouillet talks, a senior State Department official allegedly claimed that the U.S. had "deliberately set the bar higher than the Serbs could accept."³³

After the failure of the Rambouillet talks, the U.S. decision to begin a bombing campaign dramatically escalated the fighting in Kosovo, and directly triggered the massive refugee movements that followed; as Glenny (p. 658) notes, "Instead of preventing a humanitarian catastrophe, NATO's decision contributed to a flood of biblical proportions." Oddly enough, the U.S. State Department itself has accepted the view that the NATO bombing triggered the massive forced expulsions of the Albanian population in Kosovo. In a report released in the midst of the Kosovo war, the State Department claimed, "In late March 1999, Serbian forces *dramatically increased* the scope and pace of their efforts, moving away from selective targeting of towns and regions suspected of KLA sympathies toward a sustained and systematic effort to ethnically cleanse the entire province of Kosovo."³⁴

Moreover, NATO's post-hoc justifications for the attack have crumbled since the end of the war. Two weeks into the air campaign, NATO claimed that it had attacked for fear that the Yugoslav military had been planning a so-called "Operation Horseshoe" to drive the Albanian population out

³¹ See Christopher Layne and Benjamin Schwarz, "For the Record," *The National Interest*, Fall 1999, pp. 9-15. For an example of the extent to which the war in Kosovo came to be associated with the U.S. Secretary of State, see the cover story of *Time* magazine for 17 May 1999, entitled "Albright at War."

³² Tom Walker and Aidan Lavery, "CIA Aided Kosovo Guerrilla Army," *The Times* (London), 12 March 2000.

³³ George Kenney, "Rolling Thunder: the Rerun," *The Nation*, 14 June 1999. The Rambouillet talks themselves have been derided by critics as a perfect example of the recent American penchant for "drive-by diplomacy."

³⁴ See *Erasing History: Ethnic Cleansing in Kosovo*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of State, May 1999, Overview section. Italics added.

of Kosovo. In April 2000, however, it was revealed that the alleged Operation Horseshoe had been a Bulgarian military assessment of possible Yugoslav military options, which the Bulgarians forwarded to the German Defense Ministry.³⁵ Once the NATO attacks began, of course, Yugoslav military units and paramilitary forces did begin a massive operation to expel ethnic Albanians from possible invasion routes into the country—a completely predictable response, but one for which NATO leaders did nothing to prepare for. As Douglas Macgregor notes, “Faced with a population that concealed and supported the KLA, the Yugoslav forces did exactly what U.S., French and British forces have done in counterinsurgency operations: they expelled the population and removed the insurgency’s base of support.”³⁶

Another aspect of the NATO propaganda campaign involved the claim that “genocide” was being committed in Kosovo. NATO and U.S. officials liberally claimed that up to 100,000 people had been killed by Serb forces. Yet in August 2000, a spokesman for the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY) announced that the number of people killed in Kosovo during the NATO attacks would probably fall between 2-3 thousand. Moreover, as various observers have noted, with NATO bombs falling all over the province, and factoring in the fighting between the KLA and Yugoslav forces, “not all of the dead can be proved to be the victims of murder or execution.”³⁷

³⁵ John Goetz and Tom Walker, “Serbian Ethnic Cleansing Scare Was a Fake, Says General,” *The Sunday Times* (London), 2 April 2000. Judah (pp. 240-41) also questions the extent to which “Operation Horseshoe” really existed, and Ash (p. 57) cites a report on the Kosovo conflict compiled by the House of Commons’ Foreign Affairs Committee which is also skeptical.

³⁶ See Douglas Macgregor, “The Balkan Limits to Power and Principle,” *Orbis* 45 (Winter 2001), p. 100. It should be pointed out that during the Kosovo war, Colonel Macgregor was chief of strategic planning and director of the Joint Operations Center, Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe.

³⁷ See Jonathan Steele, “Figures Put on Serb Killings Too High,” *The Guardian* (London), 18 August 2000; Daniel Pearl and Robert Block, “Despite Tales, the War in Kosovo Was Savage, but Wasn’t Genocide,” *The Wall Street Journal*, 31 December 1999, p. A01. This is not to dismiss the war

In military terms, NATO could take little pride in its performance. A preliminary NATO review of the Kosovo campaign concluded that Operation Allied Force “had almost no military effect.”³⁸ According to a secret U.S. military assessment leaked to the press, 38,000 sorties (including the use of 31,000 rounds of radioactive depleted uranium shells) over 78-days of bombing managed to destroy 14 tanks and an insignificant number of armored personnel carriers and artillery pieces.³⁹ When all was said and done, NATO had inflicted embarrassingly little damage on the Yugoslav military. As Ash points out,

It is a remarkable fact that for at least a month the most powerful military alliance in history, with member states representing some two thirds of the world’s economic and military strength, with four million men and women under arms, and combined defense spending of around \$450 billion, seemed to be losing the war to a small, impoverished Balkan country with a defense budget of scarcely \$1.5 billion and about 110,000 active-duty soldiers.⁴⁰

crimes committed by Serb paramilitary forces in Kosovo, actions for which the ICTY indicted Milosevic and four of his top associates on 27 May 1999. Nevertheless, it is clear that the NATO attack dramatically escalated the scale of the violence in Kosovo at the time. For a very explicit denunciation of crimes committed by Serb forces during the Kosovo campaign, see the interview with Fr. Sava Janjic in *NIN* (Belgrade), 8 July 1999.

³⁸ Daniel Goure and Jeffrey Lewis, “The Strained U.S. Military: Evidence from Operation Allied Force,” *National Security Studies Quarterly* 6, Winter 2000, pp. 25-35; Tim Butcher and Patrick Bishop, “NATO Admits Air Campaign Failed,” *The Electronic Telegraph*, 22 July 2000.

³⁹ See John Barry and Evan Thomas, “The Kosovo Cover-Up,” *Newsweek*, 15 May 2000, pp. 23-26. Britain’s Royal Air Force did not do too well in Kosovo either. A secret RAF report leaked in August 2000 showed that of 150 “dumb” bombs (i.e., conventional munitions not using laser-guided technology), only 3 could be confirmed to have hit their target—a 2 percent success rate. See Michael Evans, “Kosovo ‘Dumb-bombs’ Missing in Action,” *The Times* (London), 15 August 2000.

⁴⁰ Ash, op. cit., p. 57.

Unable to destroy the Yugoslav army from the air, afraid to fight it on the ground, but desperate to salvage its "credibility," as the war dragged on NATO decided to expand the bounds of what was an acceptable level of "collateral damage." As NATO's target list expanded, bombs started falling on prisons, hospitals, refugee convoys, television studios, and the occasional foreign embassy.

This new strategy, however, also required NATO to engage in what can only be described as war crimes. As Michael Mandelbaum points out, the targeting of electrical grids and water facilities violate Article 14 of the 1977 Protocol to the 1949 Geneva Convention, which bars attacks on "objects indispensable to the survival of the civilian population."⁴¹ A Human Rights Watch study of NATO's conduct of the Kosovo war estimated that 500 civilians had been killed, and that a third of all the incidents and more than half of the deaths occurred as a result of attacks on illegitimate and/or questionable targets. The report concluded that NATO committed numerous violations of international humanitarian law in its Kosovo campaign.⁴² Amnesty International was more explicit, openly calling the bombing of the Serbian state television and radio building (SRT) in which 16 civilians were killed a war crime, and calling on NATO governments to bring to justice the persons responsible for the decision to attack this and other targets.⁴³

NATO's prosecution of the war raises many other disturbing issues as well. NATO's use of

cluster bombs, harshly criticized by international human rights groups,⁴⁴ has left a legacy of destruction that will last for years. Over 150 people have been killed by unexploded NATO ordinance in the postwar period. The Pentagon, however, has prohibited U.S. soldiers from being used to defuse leftover munitions.⁴⁵ Along with the damage done to the FRY's infrastructure and population, one must also consider the environmental damage done by NATO's bombing of chemical plants and oil refineries along the Danube. (If the Danube flowed northwards and westwards towards Austria and Germany rather than southwards and eastwards towards Serbia, Romania, and Bulgaria, rest assured that those oil refineries and chemical plants would never have been touched.) Not surprisingly, a United Nations task force investigating the environmental impact of the NATO attack on Yugoslavia reported that NATO had obstructed its investigation and had refused to cooperate with U.N. experts.⁴⁶

Politically, Operation Allied Force has proven to be a failure as well. Postwar Kosovo is effectively partitioned north of the Ibar River, and the agreement negotiated to end the conflict, codified in U.N. Security Council Resolution 1244, in many

⁴¹ See Mandelbaum, "A Perfect Failure: NATO's War Against Yugoslavia," *Foreign Affairs* 78 (September/October 1999), p. 6.

⁴² *Civilian Deaths in the NATO Air Campaign*, Washington, D.C.: Human Rights Watch, 7 February 2000.

⁴³ *Collateral Damage or Unlawful Killings? Violations of the Laws of War by NATO during Operation Allied Force*. London: Amnesty International, 7 June 2000. Predictably, the Pentagon's own assessment of its performance during the Kosovo war has been called a "whitewash" by other groups. As William Arkin, a military consultant to Human Rights Watch has noted, "This was a war advertised as humanitarian in purpose, in which the Pentagon stressed that it was doing everything possible to minimize civilian casualties. Yet its report does not mention one measure taken or one lesson learned." "Pentagon Report Whitewashes Civilian Deaths in Yugoslavia," Washington, D.C.: Human Rights Watch, 8 February 2000.

⁴⁴ "NATO Use of Cluster Bombs Must Stop," *Kosovo Human Rights Flash* #36. New York: Human Rights Watch, 11 May 1999.

⁴⁵ "Four Kosovar Children Killed by NATO Cluster Bomb," *Reuters*, 22 September 1999; "Kosovo Child Killed and Five Injured by Leftover NATO Bomb," *Reuters*, 14 March 2000; Carlotta Gall, "U.N. Aide in Kosovo Faults NATO on Unexploded Bombs," *The New York Times*, 23 May 2000; Jonathan Steele, "Death Lurks in the Fields," *The Guardian Unlimited*, 14 March 2000.

⁴⁶ Frances Williams, Christopher Brown-Humes and Neil Buckley, "Kosovo: NATO 'Hindered' Inquiry," *The Financial Times*, 15 October 1999. Doctors in Bosnia report that refugees from the Sarajevo suburb of Hadzici, which was heavily bombed by NATO in 1995, are experiencing three times the rate of deaths from cancer typical for other residents of Bosnia. See "Svaki treci dan neko umire od raka, na grobljima vise nema mjesta," *Oslobodjenje* (Sarajevo), 13 January 2001. See also Robert Fisk, "I see 300 graves that could bear the headstone 'Died of depleted uranium'," *The Independent* (London), 13 January 2001, p. 1. For an extended analysis of the environmental impact of the NATO attacks during the Kosovo campaign, see Vojin Joksimovic, "Militarism and Ecology: NATO Ecocide in Serbia," *Mediterranean Quarterly* 11 (Fall 2000), pp. 140-160.

ways affirmed the Yugoslav government's objections to the Rambouillet proposals. As Michael Mandelbaum points out,

The Albanians had fought for independence based on the right to self-determination. The Serbs had fought to keep Kosovo part of Yugoslavia in the name of the inviolability of existing borders. While insisting that Kosovo be granted autonomy, NATO asserted that it must remain part of Yugoslavia. The alliance had therefore intervened in a civil war and defeated one side, but embraced the position of the party it had defeated on the issue over which the war had been fought. This made the war, as a deliberate act of policy, a perfect failure.⁴⁷

The final act in this "perfect failure," however, has yet to be played out. As the international community's effort to abide by UNSCR 1244 increasingly conflicts with the KLA's goals, the potential for conflict rises commensurately. Indeed, NATO forces (including American troops) have already come under fire from guerrillas on several occasions, and as one U.S. intelligence official noted of ties between NATO and the KLA, "Not only is the honeymoon over, but now the divorce has begun."⁴⁸ What remains to be seen is how brutal and unpleasant the divorce will actually be.

One thing, however, is clear. As the contradictions inherent within UNSCR 1244 lead to greater instability within Kosovo, the Presevo Valley, and Macedonia, no one will be able to claim that KLA leaders were anything less than candid about their intentions. As Judah (pp. 103-104) cites the words of one KLA leader:

Kosova starts in Tivar [Bar in Montenegro] and ends in Manastir [Bitola in Macedonia]. We don't care what America and England think about it, we should unite with actions, not with words. We don't care what Clinton and other devils think!

Finally, it is worth asking what the Kosovo campaign portends for the future of "humanitarian

intervention," so widely touted as the justification for violating numerous aspects of international law, and for threatening regional and international stability. Carl Cavanaugh Hodge, for one, has argued,

Historically, the principle of national sovereignty has never been so absolute as is often assumed, yet its contribution to international peace has been significant enough that any abridgement of the principle in the name of superseding values ought to be accompanied by an authentic commitment to those values. Such a commitment was nowhere in evidence in the case of NATO's Kosovo adventure. The alliance failed--indeed never attempted--to protect the life and limb of the very people for whom it fought. It is therefore to be wished that Kosovo sets no precedent.⁴⁹

Indeed, despite claims that NATO's war against Yugoslavia marked a milestone in international relations, reality will most probably prove quite different. Ronald Steel is undoubtedly right when he claims the Kosovo conflict left the principle of "humanitarian intervention"

about where it began: as the exception rather than the rule. Intervention will occur where it can be done relatively cheaply, against a weak nation, in an area both accessible and strategic, where the public's emotions are aroused, and where it does not get in the way of other political, economic, or military needs.⁵⁰

In other words, "humanitarian intervention" will be done when it is politically useful--not when it is morally obligatory.⁵¹ All told, the architects and

⁴⁹ Carl Cavanaugh Hodge, "Casual War: NATO's Intervention in Kosovo," *Ethics and International Affairs* 14, pp. 53-54.

⁵⁰ Ronald Steel, "East Timor Isn't Kosovo," *The New York Times*, 12 September 1999, p. 19.

⁵¹ On this note, Andrew J. Bacevic poses an interesting question. Given the fact that conflicts in other parts of the world often involve human tragedy on a much greater scale, Bacevic asks, "According to what criteria do the United States and its allies determine that some humanitarian catastrophes demand attention, while others--usually involving people of color--go unattended?" See Bacevic, "Banal and Dubious," *The National Interest* 61 (Fall 2000), pp. 94-97. During the Rwanda crisis--when upwards of 400,000 people were literally hacked to death in a matter of weeks--a report by the Organization of African Unity claims that Madeleine Albright consistently prevented bringing the issue of Rwanda up before the U.N. Security Council during her tenure as the U.S. Ambassador to the U.N. The report cites the former Canadian ambassador to the U.N. as saying,

⁴⁷ Mandelbaum, *op. cit.*, p. 5.

⁴⁸ See "Kosovo: What Next?" *Janes Intelligence Report*, 28 June 2000; Michael R. Gordon, "NATO Patrols Edgy Border, This Time Protecting Serbs," *The New York Times*, 25 January 2001; "Ethnic Albanian Guerillas Claim Macedonia Attacks," *Agence France Presse*, 27 January 2001; "British Troops Battle Kosovo Albanians," *Reuters*, 1 February 2001; D. Joksic, "Makedonija puna obucenih militanata," *Oslobodjenje* (Sarajevo), 4 February 2001.

proponents of "Madeleine's War" have nothing to be proud of. As one of Britain's most respected commentators, Simon Jenkins of the *London Times*, summed up NATO's Kosovo campaign, if this was "victory," then it could at best be considered "a victory for cowards."

III. NATO's Kosovo

Perhaps even more disturbing than NATO's original decision to attack Yugoslavia is the fact that in the postwar period it has refused to create an environment in which the various ethnic groups inhabiting Kosovo can live in peace and security. The obsession with force protection and the overwhelming determination not to suffer any NATO casualties in the province has made murder, kidnapping, arson, and extortion the defining features of life in Kosovo under NATO. As James Orbinski, the president of *Medecins Sans Frontieres* (the organization which won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1999), noted when announcing that MSF would leave Kosovo, "There has been a passive acceptance of acts of violence against minorities. A culture of impunity has emerged."⁵²

Indeed, a typical month in postwar Kosovo certainly does not leave room for anyone to believe that NATO has created a haven of tolerance or stability, as the KLA and its offshoots have gone on an unchecked rampage of assassinations and other forms of terrorism. Consider, for instance, the situation on the ground in Kosovo in August 2000, fourteen months after NATO occupied the province to establish "peace." On August 2, Sejdi Koci, the leader of Ibrahim Rugova's Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK) in the town of Srbica, was wounded by an unknown gunman. Also on August 2, a mine planted on a road near the village

of Mali Alas killed three Roma and injured one. On August 3, an assassination attempt wounded Agim Veliu, an LDK leader from Podujevo. On August 5, another senior LDK member, Shaban Manaj, was found dead ten days after his family had reported him missing. On August 6, an LDK leader in Srbica, Mehmet Gerkinaj, was also wounded in an assassination attempt. On August 9, the wife of Avni Salihu, an LDK leader in Dragas, was killed when a bomb was thrown down the chimney of the Salihu family home. On August 13, an Albanian gang attacked and seriously wounded an elderly Serb couple in the village of Kriljevo, near Kosovska Kamenica. On August 18, hand grenades were thrown at a group of Serb children playing basketball at an outdoor court in Crkvena Vodica, wounding over a dozen. Also on August 18, the Orthodox church in Vucitrn was destroyed, and a bomb exploded in a U.N. building in Pristina housing several international organizations. On August 19, the Orthodox church in Velika Reka was destroyed after being the target of five previous bombing attacks. On August 23, KFOR troops themselves came under attack when unknown assailants fired rifle grenades at the KFOR compound in Vucitrn. (The attack was believed to be in revenge for the killing of two Albanians by KFOR troops earlier in the month.) On August 27, an Albanian hit-and-run driver drove his vehicle into a group of children in the Serb village of Skulanevo (near Lipjan), killing one child and injuring several others. The same day, an 80 year-old Serb man was killed by a burst of machine-gun fire while tending his cattle in the village of Crkvena Vodica.

July wasn't much better. Neither was September.

Former KLA members (as well as members of its successor organization, the so-called "Kosovo Protection Force," or KPC), are routinely involved in various criminal activities and violence.⁵³ Under NATO's watch the province has become the transit point for some 40 percent of the heroin sold in

"The role of the United States . . . is an almost incomprehensible scar of shame on U.S. foreign policy. The United States . . . knew exactly what was going on . . . I don't know how Madeleine Albright lives with it." See Colum Lynch, "West Turned Back on Rwanda Genocide, OAU Report Says," *The Washington Post*, 8 July 2000, p. A14.

⁵² "Nobel-Winning Agency Blasts UN, NATO in Kosovo," *Reuters*, 17 August 2000. See also "Ethnic Cleansing Continues in UN-Ruled Kosovo, Under the Eye of the International Actors," *Medecins Sans Frontieres* press release, 7 August 2000.

⁵³ For example, the arrest on August 23rd of Refki Sumen, a former KLA leader and currently a senior figure in the KPC, arrested on suspicion of being involved in extortion, smuggling, and homicide. "Kosovo Guerrilla Chief Arrested in Mafia Probe," *Agence France Presse*, 24 August 2000.

Europe and North America.⁵⁴ In the first year of NATO's occupation of the province, over 500 murders were committed (the vast majority against Serbs and other ethnic minorities), yet what is euphemistically called a legal justice system in Kosovo had failed to return a single conviction.⁵⁵ KFOR and the United Nations Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) report that theft, blackmail and kidnapping in Kosovo increased 70 percent in 2000 as compared with 1999.⁵⁶ In the summer of 2000, KFOR troops discovered a list drawn up by the KLA's secret intelligence service to assassinate various politicians in both Kosovo and Albania. Of the fifteen people on the list, three had already been murdered.⁵⁷ In January 2000, U.N. police raided the apartment of Hashim Thaci's brother and discovered DEM 500,000 in cash, the proceeds of various racketeering activities.⁵⁸ As one senior U.S. Army officer described the new structure of power in Kosovo, "We call it a thugocracy. The mafia, the politicians and the so-called freedom fighters are all connected."⁵⁹ And, of course, as has now become painfully evident, on NATO's watch Kosovo has become a playground for terrorist groups intent on destabilizing all of the southern Balkans.

"Freedom of the press" in NATO's Kosovo also takes some disturbing forms. On April 27,

2000, a newspaper linked to Hashim Thaci accused a Serb working for UNMIK of being a war criminal, and published his photograph, address, and workplace. On May 14th, the individual in question was stabbed to death. UNMIK's response was little more than a slap on the wrist, closing the paper in question for eight days. The editor of the paper immediately announced that it would continue to publish similar stories on individuals it had branded "war criminals."⁶⁰

Nor can NATO take credit for stopping ethnic cleansing. As Dennis McNamara, the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees' special envoy to the Balkans, noted in March 2000,

The tragedy is we got nearly a million (ethnic Albanian) people back and a quarter of a million new ones (Serbs and other minorities) left . . . It is a destabilising factor and it makes it difficult to see how, in regional terms, a stability pact for southeastern Europe, which is predicated on population stability, can go very far until we can deal with that refugee problem.⁶¹

Indeed, since June 1999 when NATO troops moved into Kosovo, we have witnessed what is perhaps the most comprehensive campaign of ethnic cleansing yet seen in the Balkans. During this NATO-monitored ethnic-cleansing over a quarter of a million people--Serbs, Roma, Turks, Gorani, Bosniacs, Croats, and the Jews of Pristina--have been driven from their homes. U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan has called the new ethnic cleansing of Kosovo "orchestrated," while a top

⁵⁴ See Maggie O'Kane, "Kosovo Drug Mafia Supply Heroin to Europe," *The Guardian Unlimited*, 13 March 2000. Before the war, international police officials estimate two metric tons of heroin passed through Kosovo en route to Western markets monthly. Since NATO occupied Kosovo, the amount has increased to 4.5-5 metric tons monthly.

⁵⁵ Steven Erlanger, "U.N. Official Warns of Losing the Peace in Kosovo," *The New York Times*, 3 July 2000, p. A3.

⁵⁶ Nehat Islami, "Kosovo Crime Wave." Institute for War and Peace Reporting *Balkan Crisis Report* No. 210, 17 January 2001.

⁵⁷ *Bota Sot* (Pristina), 11 July 2000.

⁵⁸ Lutz Kleveman, "Brothers in Arms Fall Out Over Spoils of Kosovo," *The Electronic Telegraph*, 12 June 2000.

⁵⁹ See Roberto Suro, "In Kosovo, an Uncertain Mission." *The Washington Post*, 20 September 2000, p. A01. In what has become all-to-characteristic of the U.S. approach to the Balkans, rather than coming up with a policy to deal with these problems, officials in the Clinton Administration decided that the overriding priority in an election year was to keep Kosovo "off the front page." See Jane Perlez, "Spiral of Violence in Kosovo Divides U.S. and its Allies," *The New York Times*, 12 March 2000, p. 1.

⁶⁰ R. Jeffrey Smith, "U.N. Halts Publication of Kosovo Newspaper," *The Washington Post*, 4 June 2000, p. A22. See also Danica Krka, "Kosovo Media Practice Targeted," *The Associated Press*, 30 May 2000. Ironically, some Kosovo Albanian journalists now claim that their working conditions were better before the NATO intervention. As one journalist recently described the atmosphere of intimidation reporters are now working under, given KLA harassment, "Under the Serbs, you knew what to expect when you wrote something they didn't like. They might come and beat you, trash the office, or throw you in jail, but that was part of the job, and you felt it was worth the risk. It was part of the struggle to end the repression. Now, with these hoods, you can't predict what they will do. They might not even warn you, just come up and put a bullet in your head." See Colin Soloway, "Intimidation Silences Pristina Media," *IWPR Balkan Crisis Report* No. 215, 6 February 2001.

⁶¹ "Refugee Cycle Threatens Balkan Stability," *Reuters*, 20 March 2000.

U.S. official has labeled it "systematic."⁶² Perhaps the most serious rebuke of NATO's efforts, however, has come from Carla del Ponte, the chief prosecutor for the ICTY, who recently claimed that "What is happening (in the Serbian province) is as serious as what happened before."⁶³ That is, what is happening in NATO's Kosovo is as serious as what happened in Milosevic's Kosovo.

Nevertheless, NATO officials need not worry that Madame del Ponte will turn her attentions on them because of Kosovo's current state, or because of their earlier violations of international law, or even because of the environmental destruction they are responsible for in the Balkans. As NATO spokesman Jamie Shea said during last year's war, "without NATO countries there would be no International Court of Justice, nor would there be any International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia because NATO countries are in the forefront of those who have established these two tribunals, who fund these tribunals and who support on a daily basis their activities."⁶⁴ Those who pay the piper, as they say, call the tune.

The Balkans' "Depleted" Future

Gandhi once said that he would die for what he believed in, but he would never kill for it. "Operation Allied Force" turned Gandhi's belief most perversely on its head. While NATO countries were unwilling to risk the lives of their own "soldiers" to save the people they had allegedly gone to war to protect, they were more than willing to rain death and destruction on the region for the sake of "credibility." As Noam Chomsky points out in his own typically incisive analysis of the Kosovo war, British operations during the conflict were code-named "Agricola." Agricola, Chomsky reminds us, was the father-in-law of Tacitus, who once famously denounced

ancient Rome's own military misadventures by saying, "Brigands of the world, they create a desolation and call it peace."⁶⁵

History may well judge NATO's actions in the same light. Glenny concludes his book by noting that the morality of NATO's attack on Yugoslavia will ultimately be decided by the dedication of Western countries to the reconstruction of southeastern Europe (p. 661). Here we could pose the issue more broadly, and ask to what extent Western policy in the region over the past decade—characterized by such things as military interventions, economic sanctions, and the creation of dysfunctional protectorates—has lain the foundations for long-term peace and stability in the region. Will subsequent generations see the Dayton Peace Accords and Operation Allied Force as efforts that ultimately brought democracy and economic prosperity to the Balkans? Or will they be seen as only the latest in a long line of attempts by the Great Powers, going back to the Congress of Berlin and the Versailles Treaty, to satisfy their own interests, even at the sake of setting the stage for new conflicts in southeastern Europe?

In the Bosnian context, a view typical of the interventionist Western attitude towards the Balkans calls on "Bosnia's Serbs, Bosniacs, and Croats... to move away from narrow ethnic politics and begin to move toward European integration."⁶⁶ But has this been either the historical or the contemporary experience of Europe itself? The basis for Europe's (somewhat successful) post-World War II efforts at political and economic integration has been based on the emergence of viable democratic nation-states enjoying a significant degree of popular legitimacy. As Ash describes this process,

... we in Western Europe have long since been molded into nation-states, in a process that lasted from the Middle Ages to

⁶² "Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Interim Administration in Kosovo," S/2000/538, 6 June 2000. The comments by the U.S. official, James O'Brien, can be found in George Jahn, "Anti-Serb Violence Condemned," *The Associated Press*, 8 June 2000.

⁶³ "U.N. Tribunal Awaiting Arrests of Suspects Karadzic, Mladic," *Reuters*, 18 July 2000.

⁶⁴ Shea's remarks were made during a NATO Press Conference in Brussels on 17 May 2000.

⁶⁵ Chomsky, *The New Military Humanism: Lessons from Kosovo* (Monroe, ME: Common Courage Press, 1999), p. 16.

⁶⁶ *Bosnia's November Elections: Dayton Stumbles*, op. cit., p. 2. This observation is not meant to advocate a partition of Bosnia-Herzegovina. Rather, it is meant to critique an all-too-common Western interventionist approach, which both ignores most of European history and often assumes a neo-imperialist attitude towards the problems (and the peoples) in the region.

the early twentieth-century . . . It's precisely on this basis of clear separation into nation-states that we have been getting together in the European Union, as well as becoming more ethnically mixed again, through immigration.⁶⁷

Indeed, the results of the European Union's Nice summit suggest that there are definite limits to the degree to which Europeans—that is, those outside the Balkans—are willing to integrate.⁶⁸ But if the modern concept of “Europe” is the goal towards which the peoples of southeastern Europe should strive, can they reach this goal by ignoring the historical path that “Europe” itself took to get there? Logically, perhaps, yes, but no one seems to have the right map.

Finally, if the international community's goal is to create stable democracies in southeastern Europe, then one would expect that international efforts would be geared towards fostering economic prosperity in the region. As the authors of a recent study note,

Few concepts in political science have been as widely accepted (particularly in the Western world) as the idea that socio-economic well-being is the crucial foundation of a sound democracy. The formation and growth of a middle class through robust economic development is considered to be the bulwark of democratic stability.⁶⁹

But far from fostering economic growth in southeastern Europe, Operation Allied Force, and many other aspects of Western policy over the past decade, have set back the region by years, if not decades. One estimate of the cost of the NATO bombing campaign to NATO itself was \$40 billion.⁷⁰ The G17 group of independent

economists in the FRY estimate that the NATO attacks resulted in an estimated \$30 billion worth of damage to the FRY's economy and infrastructure.⁷¹ Contrast these figures with the annual UNMIK budget, which amounts to less than half of one-day's bombing.⁷²

Nor was the FRY the only country in the region to suffer from Operation Allied Force; in fact, the economies of all seven countries of southeastern Europe (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Romania, Macedonia, and the FRY) went into an economic recession after the Kosovo conflict.⁷³ Western efforts to reconstruct the region, such as the “Stability Pact for Southeastern Europe,” inaugurated with much fanfare in Sarajevo in July 1999, have been dismissed as being “little more than a photo-opportunity.”⁷⁴ Not surprisingly, regional leaders have grown tired of Western promises of aid. Former Romanian President Emil Constantinescu summed up the thoughts of many when he claimed, “We really have had enough of your nice words, while you do nothing to stop our losses, which grow bigger each day.”⁷⁵

Now that the “evil leader” in Belgrade is finally gone and the Balkans are no longer front page

⁶⁷ See Ash, “Cry, the Dismembered Country,” p. 32.

⁶⁸ See, for instance, Mark Mazower, “Nice and the nation-state,” *The Financial Times* (London), 21 December 2000, p. 21. As Mazower points out, “The rise of the nation-state as the dominant form of polity on the continent—unimaginable even in 1850—was the basic story of the 20th century . . . the European nation state, born of war, having survived Hitler and the cold war . . . [has] revealed its ability to survive through adaptation once more.”

⁶⁹ Stefano Bianchini and Marko Dogo, “Foreword,” in *The Balkans: National Identities in a Historical Perspective*. Stefano Bianchini and Marco Dogo, eds. (Ravenna: Longo Editore, 1998), p. 16.

⁷⁰ Michael R. Sesit, “Cost of Kosovo War Could Hit \$40 Billion,” *The Wall Street Journal*, 29 July 1999, p. A11.

⁷¹ See “Ekonomске posledice NATO bombardovanja: procena stete i sredstava potrebnih za ekonomsku rekonstrukciju Jugoslavije,” available at <http://www.g17plus.org.yu>.

⁷² Misha Glenny, “The Muddle in Kosovo,” *The Wall Street Journal*, 23 February 2000.

⁷³ *Economic Survey of Europe*, No. 1, 2000 (Geneva: United Nations Economic Commission on Europe), p. 6.

⁷⁴ The statement was made by Prof. Ivo Banac during a seminar at the Harriman Institute on 1 December 2000.

⁷⁵ Bianca Guruita, “The Price of Acquiescence,” *Transitions OnLine*, 7 October 1999. One estimate of the cost of the international sanctions regime on the FRY to neighboring countries as of 1996 was \$35 billion. See *Unfinished Peace: Report of the International Commission on the Balkans* (Washington: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1996), p. 8. Given the catastrophic state of the Romanian economy, which can in part be attributed to the damage that Romania has incurred because of various Western policies, such as the sanctions regime imposed on the FRY, and the closing of the Danube (itself a result of NATO actions), it should not be surprising that a majority of Romanian voters on 27 November 2000 cast their ballots for parties of either the extreme left or the extreme right.

news, the region will soon become passe for all of the laptop bombardiers, indignant columnists and photo-op seeking politicians that Ash collectively calls the "something-must-be-done brigade."⁷⁶ Indeed, top foreign policy advisors for the new U.S. administration are already calling for a decreased U.S. involvement in the Balkans. As the "something-must-be-done brigade" goes on to "save" other parts of the world, the peoples of southeastern Europe will again be left on their own to try to devise some formula for living side by

side, in the absence of war, at least, if not in peace and harmony. Unfortunately, after Operation Allied Force they will be that much poorer, and dealing with yet another tragic legacy of bloody foreign intervention.

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⁷⁶ See Ash, "Kosovo: Was it Worth It?" op. cit., p. 60.

SEPARATISM AND UNIFICATION IN THE NEW WORLD ORDER

Evgeny Primakov Interviewed by Nina Khrushcheva

October 9, 2000: Interview with Evgeny Maksimovich Primakov, Member of the Russian State Duma, Leader of the Fatherland-All Russia Party, special presidential envoy to the conflict areas of Russia, former Prime Minister of the Russian Federation. Interview conducted by Nina Khrushcheva.

NK: Today there is a lot of talk about separatism versus unification. How, in your opinion, would it be possible to bridge these two extremes?

EMP: Let me start with an overview of separatism, so it will be clear exactly what we are talking about.

From the end of the last century the prevailing theory held that providing all nations with the right to self-determination would solve the national problem. This notion was fixed when it appeared in the UN Charter. Marxists were the "fathers" of this theory, and it was right until that time, when the national problem became associated with colonialism. Then, with the national problem existing in a separate state, with oppressive and oppressed nationalities within one country, it was possible to raise the question of separation solving the national problem, distinguishing between radical forms of separation and forms of separation that were too radical. The situation has changed. Two and a half thousand ethnicities, nations and nationalities live in approximately 150 nation-states.

Can you imagine the chaos the world would find itself should separatism develop? That means that separatism now is not a problem of separate states, it is a problem of the whole world community, and in that regard we have to come forward decisively against separatism. Surely that does not mean that in those cases when all parties are for separation, for the creation of a new national

state, we should resist and keep them together against their will. But when one of the parties does not agree: either a separate ethos, or a nation which is willing to separate, or the states or nations from which they are willing to separate, in these cases, I suppose, fighting for separation is not the best solution.

Another point I would like to make concerns the dangers of separatism today, which has begun to merge with extremism. In the first instance, I have in mind Islamic extremism, and second, its association with international terrorism, which makes this whole mixture extremely dangerous. Or take, for example, religious extremism. Religious extremism, in fact, has little in common with religious fundamentalism. Fundamentalism, for example, for many years had been a natural phenomenon among Muslims who lived on the territory of the Soviet Union. They were pressured, because they could not build mosques, they could not perform their rituals, etc. In any case, even if it was not prohibited, it was not approved, so the rise of fundamentalism there had its grounds. It was objectively reasoned.

It is important to understand how Muslim fundamentalism differs from Islamic extremism. Islamic extremism preaches the necessity of spreading the Islamic model of power and the Islamic model of society across nations. I would like to stress, *spreading* their power across nations. Today this particular effort creates serious dangers and threats. It used to be a widespread notion that only Iran was engaged in promoting terrorism,

extremism and separatism. I do not want to argue now that Iran did not do this. However, Iran is a Shiite state, and Shiites differ tremendously from other Muslims. Besides, Iran, for example, has little to do with the Sunnite extremism that is emerging today. Sunnism includes the Wahabi movement and other tendencies, which primarily come from Afghanistan. Afghanistan has been shaken for decades by violence and power struggles, and it shakes those countries around it. It is the state where Talibs and Taliban rule without hiding their beliefs. These beliefs are to spread Islamism to the neighbouring states by means of power. That is what separatism means.

NK.: Take the Russian case, would you agree that one should not unite or divide parties that are desperate to be separated, unless there is a way to solve the problem via democracy? Is there a way to solve Russia's problems, to help the nationalities within Russia in their desire to become independent, via democracy?

EMP: Of course there is. Moreover, I don't think we really have any other striking examples besides Chechnya, where a part has a choice to either stay or leave. although, of course, ethnic conflicts do exist in other places too. And they will exist. The situation in the United States is different, where each state has a mixed population and nobody save Native Americans have historical origins in this or that area. But Russia is a different story. Let's look at the North Caucasus, for example. From the very beginning, much earlier than the Russians, many other nationalities and ethnic groups lived there. Or let's take Povolzhie (areas by the Volga River). There, too, ethnic groups and nations are very mixed. That is why, in my opinion, we *have* to solve all these problems democratically, providing necessary elements of cultural autonomy and assistance for the national self-expression of the nationalities which are subjects of the Russian Federation today. On the other hand, they should not get special economic treatment because of their ethnicity or nationality. Why, for example, should Russian territories neighboring with Tatarstan

or Bashkortostan be worse off than those of the Tatar and Bashkir nationalities? So, the national support of one nation should not come at the expense of others.

NK: And what about the nationalities that would now like to return to areas which were theirs historically, "by origin"? For example, the case of Crimean Tatars who want to take possession of lands they once owned?

EMP: In cases like that they have the option of returning individually. Even if we admit (and we admit fully) that historical injustices and historical crimes took place when many nationalities were moved away from their lands involuntarily, we have to be realistic. During the time that has passed since those crimes (about half a century now), these lands have been peopled by others. It would be unfair to evict those who live there now, because it would be a repetition of the same mistakes fifty years later. We may encourage them, when they are able, to buy out pieces of land or to settle in other places, but again to evict one group and return others in its place would be unfair. Or take the Chechen auls—originally many were the Cossacks settlements. During the Revolution many of those Cossack settlements were occupied by highlanders, because many Cossacks fought against Bolsheviks. But after the revolution, as a rule, many pro-Bolshevik ethnicities were encouraged to take the lands of those ethnicities that were against the revolution. So in reality, many auls now stand on Cossack land. However, it would be wrong to evict the Chechens now to restore the Cossack settlements.

NK: This problem, obviously, should be solved by today's measures, finding options and possibilities to enable them to live their lives according to the present reality. But how can we do that practically and to the satisfaction of all?

EMP: Undoubtedly, it's a difficult problem. It must be done by democratic means, which eventually should lead to the situation, where

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people have to find peaceful ways of living together and adjusting to one other; restoring some relations that they used to have, and not making those relationships antagonistic. There is no other option.

Today we can't really decide to evict someone in favor of some else and then destroy their monuments. We will get the same results we had after 1917 and 1991. We will do the same unfair things that we did before. Everyone who is calling for the "restoration of justice" by destructive means is creating a new injustice. And one should not do that.

NK: You mentioned the Islamic religion. I would like to ask you about the Christian and Muslim religions. As always, the Orthodox Church argues with the Vatican, insisting on its own uniqueness, while Muslims unite and become stronger and stronger.

EMP: On the whole, Christians are not killing each other, they are not really fighting. And the Orthodox have their reasons to be concerned—they disapprove of Catholic attempts to implant their religion in places where the Orthodox Church already has some roots. So most disagreements come from this. But this is not life-threatening for either party.

NK: Don't you think that Islamic countries uniting presents a danger and that this is taking place too close to the southern borders of the former Soviet Union? In Tajikistan, for example, and other southern areas close to Afghanistan. Not far from Russia. Is there a danger for Russia?

EMP: I do not think that the confrontation is between Islam and Christianity here. Let us take the former Central Asian republics of the former Soviet Union, currently Central Asian states. When a wave of extremism comes from Afghanistan, the fights are not between the Christians and the Muslims; the fights are between the Islamic extremists and regular Muslims for the sacred or secular type of the state.

NK: Many in Russia say that there is a possible threat for the Orthodox Church if it is unable to resist either the Muslim dangers or the Vatican pressures.

EMP: No, Orthodoxy is not in danger.

NK: Now a question concerning the Arab-Palestinian conflict, which does not seem to be ending any time soon. How do you estimate the conflict escalation in the Middle East? What should we expect? Will it be solved one day?

EMP: There is a very dangerous development now in that part of the world. Mainly, I think it is Israel's fault. Israel has been holding a pretty tough position, trying to impose all its conditions on the Palestinians. Because of this, signing the peace agreement has been delayed and delayed. Americans, in their turn, have monopolized the process, trying to base everything on the upcoming elections in the United States in November [2000]. Russia has been practically isolated, despite the fact that we could exert a positive influence on both sides. We could have done a lot. A lot of frustration has arisen because of these conditions, again on all sides! This frustration, in fact, can be threatening, as the situation has gotten even more complicated with some religious issues. You see, it is painful for both sides, for example, when Sharon appears on land that Palestinians believe belongs to them, land on which they have mosques and sacred objects. No doubt, he did so to make a point, but he shouldn't have. Why should he demonstrate his power, insisting that he can solve all problems by means of that power? It creates bad energy and provokes a negative reaction, which often leads to irreversible results. And then we complain that the Arabs are violent. Both Palestinians and Arabs certainly have extremists among them, so we would be wise not give them a reason to be violent.

NK: What role could Russia play in helping to solve this problem?

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EMP: Russia is already playing a more active role. While we are having this interview, the Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ivanov, is in the Middle East. He is trying to smooth the situation, to influence both sides. Much work has been done to persuade Palestinians to delay the unilateral declaration of their state. We have a very constructive position, which is designed to help them to come to a compromise. The United States, however, thinks that because Russia is trying to smooth the edges it is actually up to something. Funny, isn't it?

It was the same situation, by the way, with Russia's position towards Iran and Saddam Hussein. Russia, then the Soviet Union, had a certain position towards those countries, and because of the Cold War this position was, understandably, in opposition to the position of the United States. When the Cold War was over, Russia could have worked together with America to smooth the situation. There were even very positive signs of cooperation during the Gulf War. However, Russia was not given a real chance, always lagging behind in the American view, always doubted, asked to prove, explain and justify itself. After 10 years it is obvious that such a shortsighted approach on the part of the United States has damaged the world situation in respect to those states.

NK: A question concerning Israel or rather the example of Israel. Is it possible to solve the Kurd problem the same way that, in 1948, the question of Israel was decided, by giving them the land and the state?

EMP: I am afraid, not. First, Kurds live in several states. They live in Iran, Iraq, Syria, some Kurds live in Russia, and they do not in any way represent a united power. For example, during the Iran-Iraq war the Iranian Kurds could not unite with the Iraqi Kurds, and in the end the Iranians fought against their government for Saddam Hussein. The Iraqi Kurds fought against Saddam Hussein but for Iran's government, i.e., Kurds were fighting on two different sides. That is, it is

impossible to solve this problem *à la* the "Palestinian war."

NK: Another question, this time about Yugoslavia. You recently said in a private conversation, "What can Milosevic do? He has to leave." And the next day he agreed and acknowledged the election results. Had you already known that he would have to leave power? What is his fate? Will the Balkans calm down one day or not?

EMP: Common sense, really. It was very important for Milosevic to accept his defeat as quickly as possible. Milosevic, however, is not the core of the problem. In fact, some Western politicians contributed to the Yugoslav problem without a clear understanding of where it might lead. What has happened in Yugoslavia now is not the end. Why? Because Montenegro, for example, would be tough to crack.

NK: Will it separate?

EMP: The President of Montenegro [Milo Djukanovic] just announced that it would be a different federation, as they might try to separate. If they do, the fate of President Kostunitsa is not clear. He is supposed to be the President of Yugoslavia, but there will be no Yugoslavia. Besides, they already have a President in Serbia [Milan Milutinovic]. Another problem is that the newly-elected president will have to deal with the situation in Kosovo, which NATO and its politics have lead down a blind alley. It is absolutely unclear what will come out of this situation. The Army of the so-called Albanian Liberation is a terrorist organization right now, and the Americans, by the way, have said so themselves. Then they changed their mind by 180 degrees as they understood that they are real terrorists. Albanians want to separate. I don't quite believe that President Kostunitsa—a Serb—will want to assist Kosovo's secession from Yugoslavia. In fact, it actually could have been easier to solve many problems with Miloshevic. He comes from the right, and therefore has no fear of

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the strikes from the right. We [the Soviet Union] always had much better relations with the Americans, for example, when Republicans were in power.

NK: The Yugoslav problem, then, is not a Milosevic problem, and you think Kostunitsa knows it.

EMP: The Yugoslavia shake-up is still far from over.

NK: Now Belarus and Russia.

EMP: I am a very strong supporter of bringing them together, uniting and creating one state in the end. I think it would be beneficial for us, for Belorussians and for other nationalities who lived in the former Soviet Union.

NK: Why?

EMP: I do not agree with those who consider that union with Belarus will hinder Russia. During the Soviet era, Belarus was "assembly shop" for the Soviet republics. That is, a republic with good intellectual resources and hardworking manpower. This republic does not possess as many natural resources as Russia, but it is self-sufficient. And moreover, the same historical origins bind us together. Why should we live in two different states, especially, if the people, and not just small groups from both sides, want it?

NK: You mean, union with Russia is not simply Lukashenka's idea.

EMP: Absolutely not. If a referendum were held right now, most people would vote for unification. Besides, Lukashenko does not think that it has to happen immediately, without serious deliberation. His objectives are to secure Belorussian independence, while at the same time developing closer ties with Russia. And we agree with him. By the way, it took Western Europe a long time to reach an agreement on the common currency, and it's still not completely finalized. Denmark

had a referendum, and although the state is an EU member, the common currency was not approved. These processes are very complicated, and the main point is that we must move forward toward unification. Then, perhaps, Ukraine too will want closer ties.

NK: Is Russia satisfied with Lukashenka as President of Belarus, since he supports unification?

EMP: What does it mean—satisfied or not satisfied? If the Belorussians are satisfied with him, he should satisfy us as well. The majority of Belorussians support him. There are going to be elections there soon [October 15, 2000] and I am sure they will be democratic. He promised that, and that is true—absolutely all parties participate in the election process. They can also have their observers at the voting districts. They have the right to count or recount votes and provide their own report of the results. Two of Lukashenka's rivals are under investigation right now, but they are official candidates and they will participate in the elections. When I met with him recently, he told me that he would like them to run for election, so no one can claim that it was not a democratic election.

NK: It would not be the same sort of elections as those that just took place in Yugoslavia, that is, with unclear results?

EMP: No. In Yugoslavia, believe me, it was not that bad either. In every country, I assure you, there are always a few instances of election fraud. I think the Yugoslav opposition made a major mistake. It was necessary to have a second round of voting there. Then no one could have said the elections were not legitimate, and they would have certainly won the second round. A 10 percent difference would be more than sufficient in the second round to prove their victory. If the re-elections had taken place within one week or so, the situation would not have changed a bit, and the results would have been more than just legal.

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NK: And, if I may, I would like to ask you one last question about the fate of Russians living in other states. They have been Russians all their lives, they represented a big powerful state, and now they are citizens of states that are not always favorable to the Russians. How does the government plan to help them, if it does at all?

EMP: We ought to help them. First, of course, we should not push them to leave those "other states." Why should we lose our influence in this manner, I mean cultural and so on? And then, it is necessary to assure that their legal situation is stable, that they are not treated as second-class citizens. We are doing a lot through our governmental channels and, in my assessment, we do a good job in this regard. If we continue working in this direction, both the countries where they live, and the Russian people in those countries, will

be loyal to each other. At the same time we face a very important problem: 25 million Russians stayed in the republics of the former Soviet Union after its collapse. Surely, if some of them want to return we would like them to go to places other than Moscow in order to populate those parts of Russia that are not sufficiently populated, such as, for example, the Ural area, where the total population is only 18 million. I think if we provide emigrants with good enough living conditions and reasonable comfort they will go to these areas. The United States became great after they populated their virgin lands.

NK: Thank you.

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